

IZINTOMBI ZAMATSHE EZIMSULWA



BUTLSTAX

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2011g

YVONNE VERA



Izintombi Zamatshe Ezimsulwa

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Published by Weaver Press, Box A1922, Avondale, Harare. 2011

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Photograph of Yvonne Vera: Tafadzwa Gwetai

Cover Illustration: Tafadzwa Gwetai

Cover Design: Danes Design Harare

Typeset by Weaver Press

Printed by: Benaby Printers, Harare

Weaver Press would like to offer their grateful thanks to
MS Zimbabwe for the support which they gave to
the translation of this text.

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ISBN: 978 1 77922 142 1

Izintombi Zamatshe Ezimsulwa

Yvonne Vera

Inoveli Iguqulelwe

EsiNdebeleni

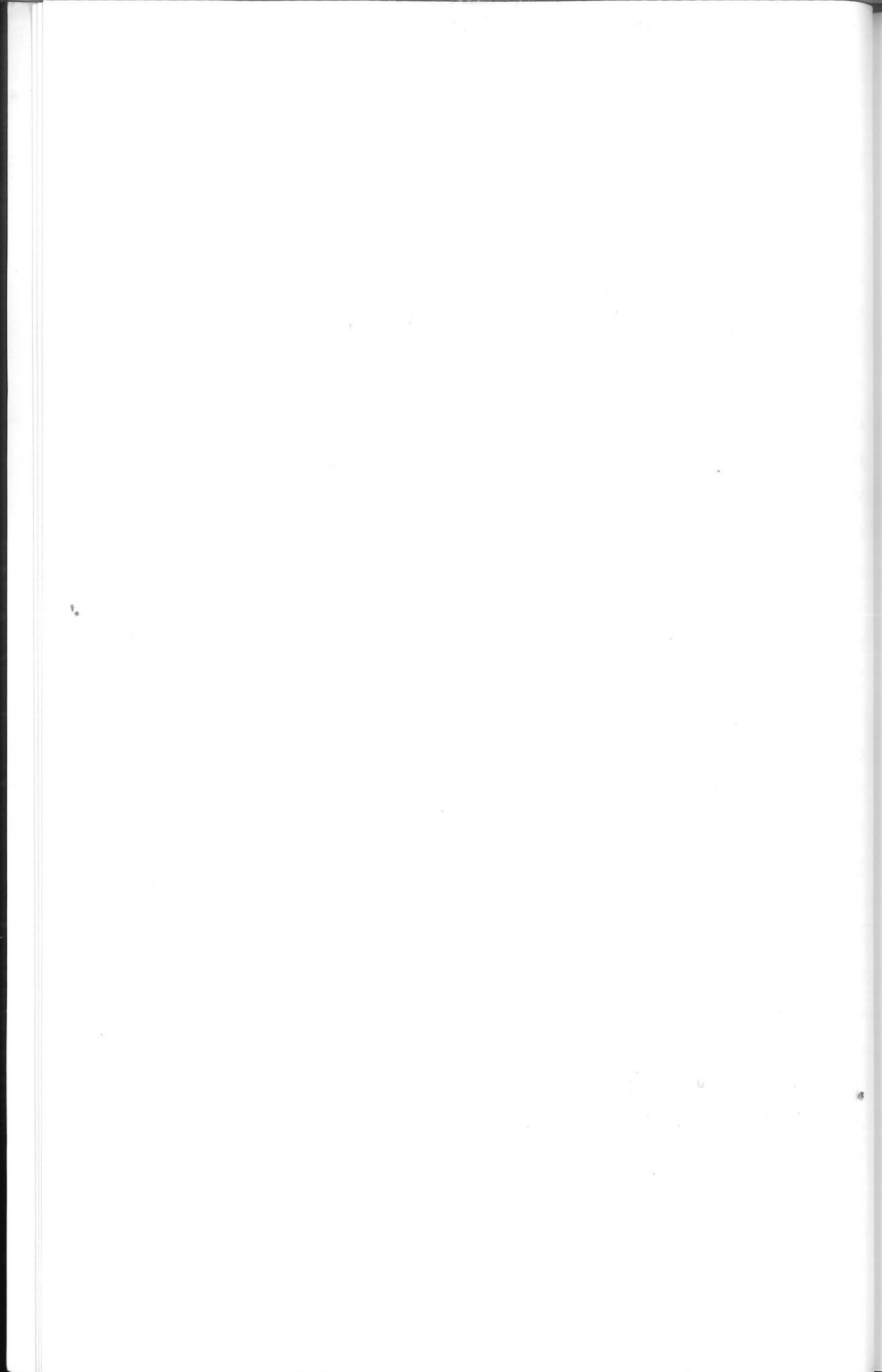
ngu

Tommy Matshakayile-Ndlovu



YVONNE VERA

UYVONNE VERA (1964-2005), ongomunye wabalobi beZimbabwe abaziwa kakhulu, wazalelwa koBulawayo. Wathola iziqu zobutokotela eNyunivesithi yeYork kweleCanada. Waphenduka koBulawayo lapha afika khona waphiwa isikhundla sokuba nguMqondisi weNational Gallery kusukela ngomnyaka ka1997 kusiya fika ku2003. Amanoveli akhe amahlanu asaguqulelwa kuzindimi ezinengi njalo asathola imimvunzo eminengi egoqela lomvunzo womkhono we-Afrika owenhlanganiso yaBalobi beCommonwealth (ngomnyaka ka1997, ngenoveli yakhe ethi *Under the Tongue*), wathola futhi umvunzo wakoMacmillan owaBalobi owe-Afrika (ngo 2000, ngenoveli yakhe ethi *The Stone Virgins*), wathola futhi umvunzo we Italy othiwa Premio Feronia (ngo2003 ngenoveli yakhe ethi *Butterfly Burning*), kanye lomvunzo weSweden othiwa Pen Tucholsky (ngo 2004) ewuphiwa ngenxa yomsebenzi wakhe wonke otshengisa isibindi esimangalisayo. Ngaphezu kweqoqo lakhe lezindatshana ezimfitshane, elilesihloko esithi: *Why Don't you Carve Other Animals* (1992), indatshana yakhe emfitshane elesihloko esithi: 'Independence Day' yangeniswa egwalweni olulesihloko esithi: *The Picador Book of African Stories* (2000) njalo indatshana yakhe elesihloko esithi: 'Writing it Out' yashicilelwa egwalweni olulesihloko esithi: *Writing Still* (2003). Amanoveli kaVera aphinda njalo aphiwa inhlonipho lalapha ekhaya lapha uVera aphiwa khona umvunzo wabashicileli beZimbabwe othiwa: The Zimbabwe Publishers Literary Award ngenoveli yakhe eyabangenhle ukwedlula wonke ngo 1996 (elesihloko esithi: *Without a Name*) njalo lango 1997 (ngenoveli elesihloko esithi: *Under the Tongue*). Imibhalo yakhe seyaguqulelwa ezindimini ezilandelayo: isi-Jelamani, olweSpain, olweCatalan, olwe-Italy, olweSweden, olwesiDutch, olweDenmark, olweFiniland, olweNorway kanye lolweFrance. Inoveli yakhe elesihloko esithi: *The Stone Virgins* yiyo eyokuqala ukuguqulelwa elimini lweSindebele iphiwa isihloko esithi: *Izintombi Zamatshe Ezimsulwa*.

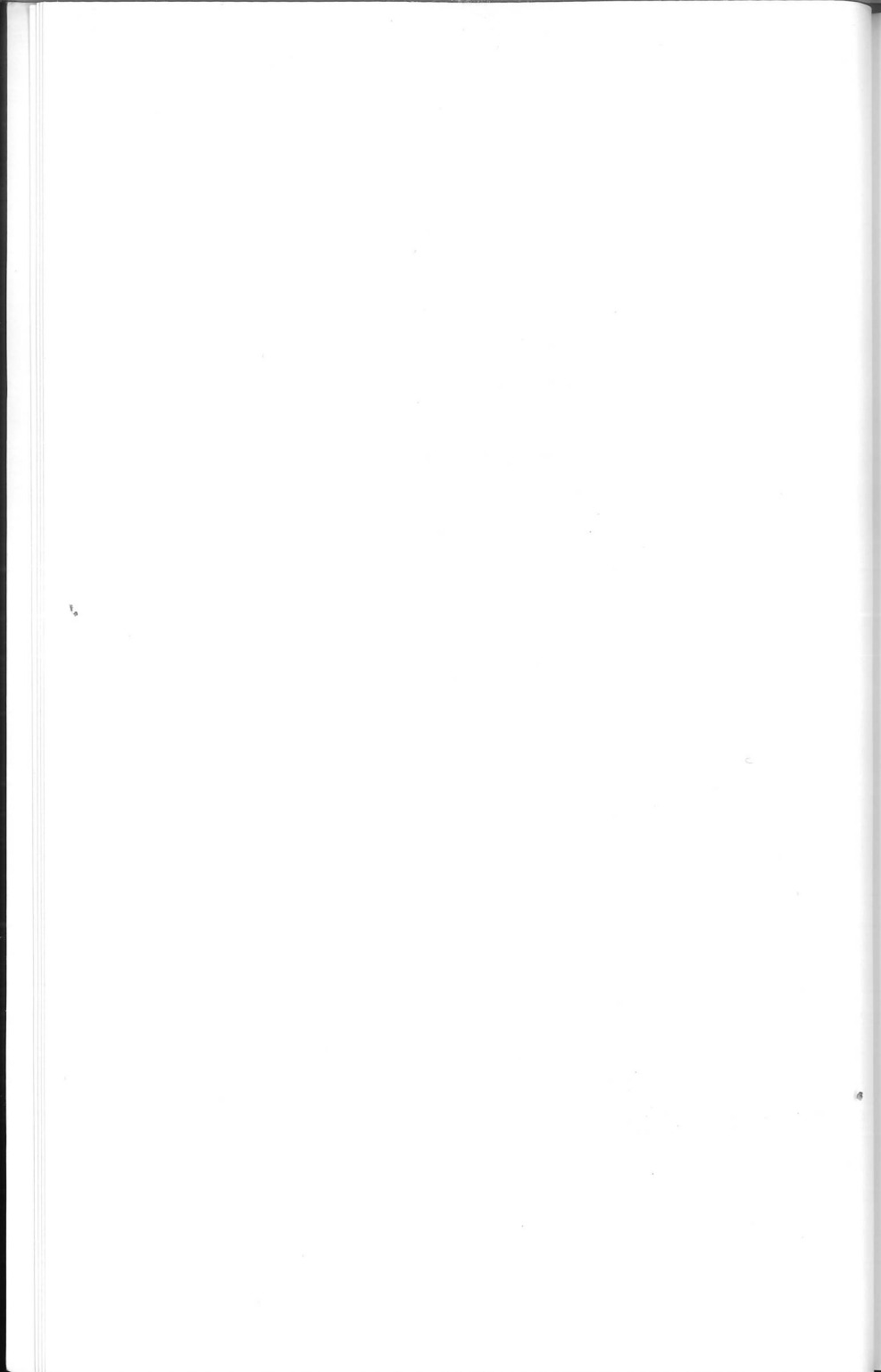


Ugwalo Lolu Lwethulwa
Ngenhlonipho Ku

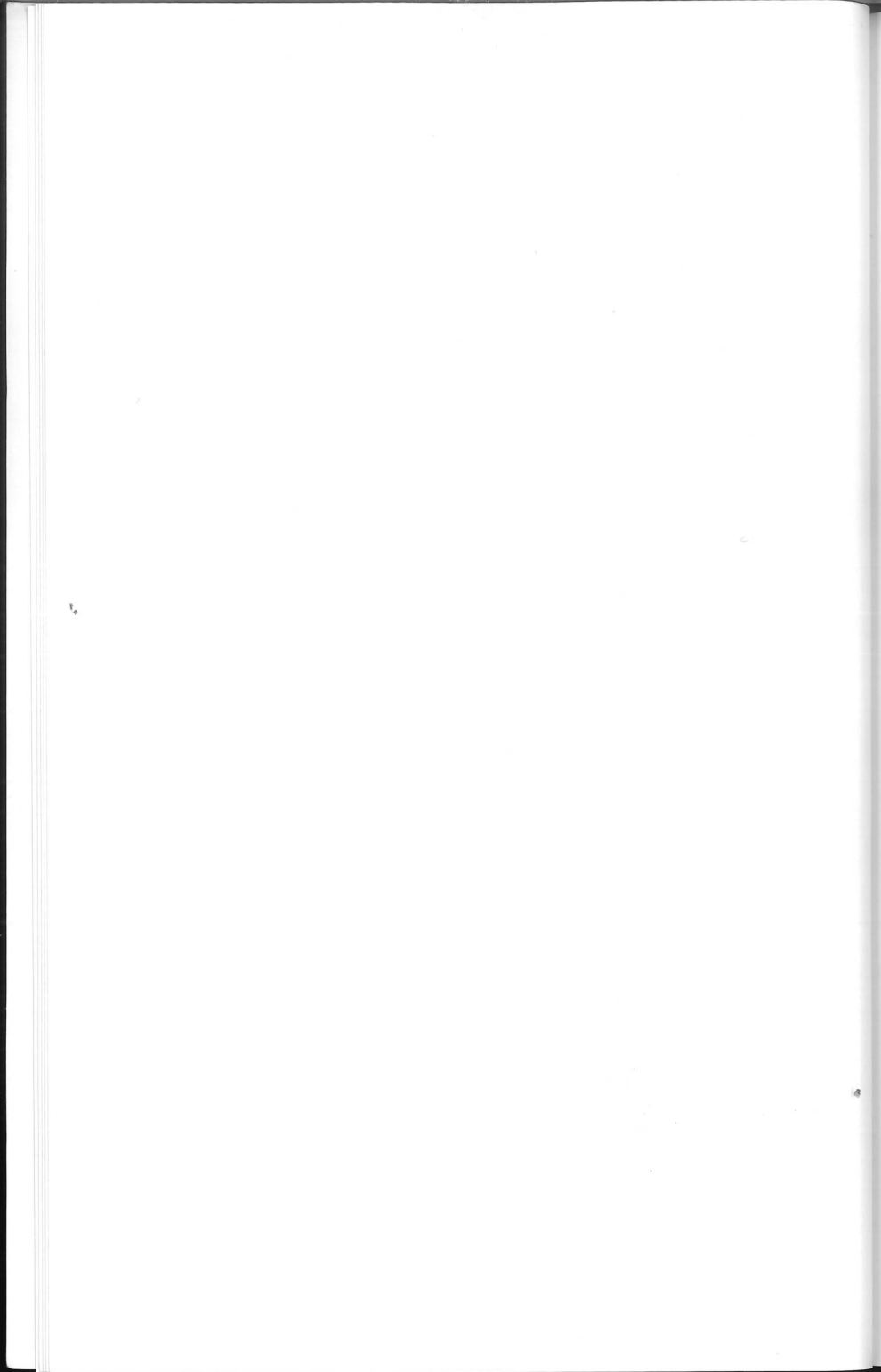
John H. C. Jose

Ngenxa yezenzo zakho zobuntu obumangalisayo
Inkambo lokuhlalisana okuhle emhlabeni

Ngilokubonga okukhulu kudolobho leMunich
ngokuhlala kwami eVilla Waldberta, Feldafing,
lapha inoveli
le eyabhalelwa khona.



1950-1980



ISAPHLUKO SOKUQALA

UMGWAQO USOLOBHONI KOBULAWAYO uquma usuka esitaladini uFort (kuCharter House), uqume umgwaqo uJameson (uJameson wokuHlasela), weqe isitalada uMain, uqonde ezitaladini uGrey, uAbercon, uFife, uRhodes, loBorrow, uphuma ungena phakathi kwe-Centenary Gardens ezicicima uhlaza oluhlanganisa amaluba emihlobohlobo amadaliya, amaphetshuniya lamanye, izihlahlakazana ezibomvu lezilithanga, uqhubeke wedlule eNational Museum, esandleni senxele. Esandleni sokudla, okuqondene nta layo imuseum, kumi impompi efafaza amanzi kokuphela iqandisa umoya; amanzi antshaza ezandleni zezithombe ezinkulu ezimbili ezezintombi zamanzi. Kulegwaliba elimi phambi kwempompi le elibekwe esitubhini esiphakemeyo, eliyisikhumbuzo samagama alabo abafela empini eyayikhokhelwe nguWilson. Yikho nje kulesitalada uWilson. Ungaqhubeka usehla ngomgwaqo kugcwele imihlobohlobo yezihlahla zamagamuthri akutshaya ngomnuko wawo; uqhatshi lwawo lumnandi. USolobhoni ngumgwaqo oqonde nta ongazombiyo, uzigqaja ngobuhle bawo. Ingxenye yawo yakuqala, kusuka enzikini yedolobho, ivalwe yizihlahla zamajakharanda ezitshaya ngamaluba ayiphephulu. Zithe kla ngobuhle. Izihlahla lezi ezinkulu zimi zajama zisuka emhlabathini, lomhlambi wamahlamvu azo amancuncuncu, impande zazo zifuqa umhlabathi uzudundubale lapha ezihlangana khona lelitshe, zikhwele phezulu kwalo; ngemva kwalokho ziphinde zitshone

ngaphansi komhlabathi. Phakathi kwazo kuhlonywe izihlahla ezinkanyazelayo, ezilamaluba abomvu okungathi ngamathuthuva, zimise okwemilaladwayi. Kusukela ngoMpalakazi kusiya fika uZibandlela yizo esezibusa lezi zihlahla, zisenza umkhathi ubukeke ngamandla ukwedlula lokho okungenziwa ngamajakharanda. Yonke indawo yedolobho esisele isindwe ngesamende langamatshe. Ngaphandle kwalapha lalaphaya, kulezihlahla zezinga, ezilamaluba alithanga acije ngaphezulu, kuthi ngoNhlangula langoNtulikazi; lapho ke umumo womkhathi uyabe usuqanda kakhulukazi.

Kesixoxeni kuqala, ngamajakharanda. Amahlamvu lamaluba awo kuyahlangana ngaphezulu kuvale izitalada ezibanzi kanye lezitubhu eziphahle izitalada lezo. Izihlahla zidala ubuhle obukhulu okwamagama. Ebusweni bakhe wonke umuntu odlula lapho ukukhithika kwamahlamvu ngesivuvu esikhulu kwakha umthunzi wesihlahla okungathi ngumuthi wokuphendula umbala ochithiweyo, kanti ukukhanya lakho kubhukutsha kusuka phezulu kudabula phakathi koghathshi olutshayisa ikhanda; umthunzi ulomnuko olamandla, ongena uthophelela phakathi. Izihlahla lezi, ezahlanyelwa ngonanzelelo ukuze zibalaze umgwaqo, zidala inkungu yombukiso wenjabulo enkulu. Amaluba alezi zihlahla abunjwe njengamabhera asendleleke emgwaqweni kwangathi licansi elendlelweyo, lapho-ke kuphonguthi thutshiyani abalobokazi labosonyongwane babo besuka emthethwandaba kamantshi kuzakhiwo zeTredgold, izimota zibathathe zedlule izakhiwo ezimbalwa zisehla ziqonde ePhakhi yeSentinari lapho abaphuma khona kulezo mota ezinkanyazelayo. Baphuma kulezo zimota betshaye ngezigqoko ezinde ezitshibilikayo lezandla eziphakathi kwesiliki emhlophe yamagilavu ziphethe izixha zamaluba ayiphinki. Bagombolozela impompi ehlala intshaza amanzi kanye lejaha elitshadayo. Ukuma kwabo belindele ukuthathwa imifanekiso kwenziwa ngobunono obukhulu. Ijaha ligqoke ibhatshi elilomsila, iyembe elamabuko, inorobakhi eyimpunga leluba lerozi elimhlophe elihlonywa esikhaleni sesikopela. Othatha imifanekiso uyakhothama ahambihambise njalo avikele ingilazi yomtshina wakhe wemifanekiso ens-

abeni zelanga lemikhizweni esuka empompini, kodwa evumela ukuthi amaluba la amahle kangaka abonakale. Ukusukela ekuqaleni kukaM-fumfu kuza ukutshisa okungapheliyo kanye lezulu elitheleka ngamandla; uLwezi utshaya avuthuze amaluba. Kuyabe sekutshisa ngamandla. Ngemva kwesikhathi eside amaluba asabuna, amahlamvu amancuncuncu aqala ukuphenduka abelithanga, njalo ome. Akhithikela phansi kungathi lizulu. Izihlahla khathezi sezisele zinqunu kodwa zijame samakhosi kanti ngasikhathi sinye intanga ezingathi zilempiko ziyaphaphazela emkhathini olomfasimbi. Ziyaphephuka emoyeni. Ziphapha ziqonge phezu kwezihlahla. Nanziyana le emkhathini.

USolobhoni yisitalada esihle kakhulu lapha koBulawayo njalo ungakhangela usehla laso amehlo akho abone kude le okwamamayila lamamayila ubona yonke into kanye lamaluba; usehla laye khonale usuka evurandini eliphezulu endlini kaMhlonitshwa uWilloughby eyaziwa ngokuthi yiDouslin House (wayengomunye wabacandi bendlela, amapayinela phela, oweza leNkampani yamaNgisi eyaziwa ngokuthi yiBritish South Africa Company), kumbe uwubuke umi eceleni kwawo usewoteleni kaSelborne (yakhiwa ngomnyaka ka 1897), kumbe umi esitolo sakoThomas Meikle. USolobhoni ukuthatha njalo akuse emavinkilini ase-Ascot leNkundleni yoMjaho wamabhiza, lapho amabhiza ajanquka khona egijima esedlula emfuleni uMatshamhlophe, ephuma emaphethelweni edolobho esedlula ezabhabha ezibukekayo ezeRiverside, eHillside, leBurnside. Endleleni yakho usiya kulezi zabhabha ezinhle kangaka, ungaketha ukujika ngomgwaqo uCatherine Berry Drive kumbe uPhillips Way okukhokhela ukuthi udlule eBulawayo City Golf Club, indawo eluhlaza tshoko, udabula ezitaladini ezincinyane ezimi zodwa le zicatshile. Izitalada lezi zaphiwa amabizo ezimbongi zamaNgisi - uKipling, uTennyson, uByron, uKeats loColeridge. Ngaphezu kwakho konke lokhu, uSolobhoni uqonde nta njalo kazombazombi, okwenza wenelise ukuthi ubone konke ungaphazanyiswa lutho.

USolobhoni uphuma lawe emaphethelweni edolobho aqonde

khonale eGoli, uxhuma amadolobho la womabili njengenkaba exhuma umntwana kunina, ngakho-ke ingxenywe yalelo dolobho ilapha, injabulo yalo lokuthaba kubonakala ngendlela ekhangayo izisebenzi zedolobheni leli ezihamba ngayo, izisebenzi ezimnyama, ezidabula zisuka koBulawayo ziye eGoli ziphinde ziphenduke, njalo idolobho lelo zilithatha njengesibane esikhokhela bonke; zithi lapha seziphenduka ekhaya zibuye sezitshaya ngonyawo oluphangisayo njalo sezikhuluma ziphangisa. Sezifunde okunye okusuka kumangalise, obe kungalindelwe; ukuthatha amathuba. Bezitshone phansi emigodini yegolide, zithwele izingowane zensimbi ezixhunywe amathotshi, zingene emathunjini omhlaba, zigebha lelo golide eliligugu elingasilazo. Kalisilazo ngitsho. Kakusikuthi bangabantu abamnyama nje kuphela, bangabemzini. Vele kabaziyengi ngokuthi okwenjiwayo ngokwabo. Lo ngumsebenzi abawenza ukuze babhadalwe imali, ngakho-ke bayawenza. EGoli...bayatsho baze bawise iphika...bexoxa ngeJohannesburg. Indlela ababiza ngayo ibizo lalelo dolobho itsho okunengi ngalo, ukugoqa kwabo ulimi kukutshela konke; ungakubona lalapho abakhwela khona besakha njalo uwuzwe lomnuko wakho konke okuphekwayo ebusuku, eGoli. Bakhumbula ezadlulayo njalo bagcina ukusuthiseka ngokudinwa kwabo okuyinto engeyalabo abalezifiso ezingcwele, abalesineke esifunwa ngumuntu ohlanyela izihlahla zamailemoni lezama-orenji ngokuxhuma ugatsha kwesinye ukuze kudaleke isihlahla esitsha esilezithelo ezimunyu.

Basuthisekile. Bayakwazi ukuvika labo abathanda ukubakhangela. Bayakwazi ukumelana lalabo ababakhumbulelayo, ukumelana lemibuzo engelabungane lelenzolo mayelana lokubakhona kwabo kuleli dolobho, njalo lokhu bakwenza bengacwayizi lokucwayiza. Bakhalisa iminwe yabo, bahambise elinye idolu lithi sudu phambili, bagide ngobunono obukhulu. Ekuqaleni, yiminwe yabo kuphela abayihambisayo, kube ngumdlalo wezithende, kuqala isithende kulandele amazwane; imizimba yabo ikhululekile njengotshani obusesifuleni esigeleza amanzi. Abakuthintayo, bahlabela ngakho bekweyisa; abakweyisayo, abakuthinti.

Amabhulugwe abo ayalenga esedlula izithende, exega, ewubuzela, izandla zabo zithe tshwathi ezikhwameni ezinkulu zimbambatha imilenze ngokuphangisa. Amadoda la kawaselasineke, aselungele ukusuka ahambe. Awasahlalisekanga, aselungele ukubuyela eGoli, engelalutho, afisa ukuyasebenza khonale, ngalokho kuthokoza okungazikanga, okuhamba ndawonye laloba yini into ehlala okwesikhathi esifitshane. Asekulungele ukuyalala ezitaladini ezilezibane ezikhanya kakhulu, asekulungele ukuyadinga indawo lapho angazithukuza khona akhohlwe ngenhlungu zawo njalo akhombise abafazi abatsha kuthi kunjalo impembe ezikhaliswayo kanye lemisindo yamabhayisikili etshitshiliza ethareni konke lokhu kuwakhuthaze ukuthi aqhubekele phambili. Njalo lapho kawaziwa muntu.

Ekhaya kukoBulawayo. Kuleli icele elinganeno kwedolobho, hatshi kuleliyana, elawo icele lehlukanisiwe laleliyana. Ngale kwesitalada uLobhengula, isitalada sokucina ungakafiki kusitalada uFort njalo utsholobele ungena phakathi kwedolobho, ungakafiki lapha, le phambili. Athi angaphenduka lapha omakhelwana bawo bawavulele indawo bawayekele edlule, njalo ayakukholisa ukuthathwa njengabantu bemzini edolobheni lakibo lapha wonke umuntu alalelisisa ukukhuluma kwawo ngamazwi ahelezayo, ahlole ukuvilapha kwawo lokweyisa kwawo, ahloniphe ukuzicomba kwawo, amabhanti awo ezikhumba zebululu, lengowane zawo zesikhumba sendlovu, ephethe emlonyeni, kanye lendlela yawo yokukhuluma epha amadlabuzane, engayekelelani kambe, singasatsho ngamabhulugwe awo alamakhorosibhanti ahlala ewakhweza ngaphezulu kokhalo lapho esizwa kusithi enzenjalo, konke lokhu ekwenza emini lapho eyebukela umdlalo webhola eNkundleni yeBarboufields, eyeLuveve, kumbe eyeWhite City. Lapho abukela umdlalo phakathi kweHighlanders lelinye iqembu lemnini, kungakhathalekile ukuthi igama lalo lithiwani. Lapho-ke agqoka amayembe awo adulayo, agoqe imikhono butshapha nje ize ifike endololwaneni, kuthi intanjana zabwo ezizinzwezwe zilenge nje zize zifike ekhalweni. Okungaphezulu kwalokho yikuthi azi lomgido

wamagamubhutsi, eminye nje imiculo, lengoma yabogqiha labo-qongqothwane.

Injabulo yawo le ifuqwa yizinto ezibonakalayo, amareddy awo oku-lengisa, amawadirobhu awo aleminyango emibili, asanda kuthengwa. Aminyezelwa angeniswe ezindlwani zawo ezikamelu linye, zilophahla oluphansi, izindlu ezivele seziminyene ngenxa yemibheda yawo yensimbi elala umuntu oyedwa, izitofu zepharafini, kanye lamakhabothi okubukisa impahla aceciswe ngamaluba esiliki, ngamatipoti, lemiganu efayo. Kulamakhaphethi ankanyazelayo athengwa koNield Lukan awokuvala iphansi lezindlu zelokitshini elisindwe ngesamende ukuze kudediswe ukuqanda kwesamende. Kawazikhathazi loba nje ngemva kweviki, kumbe ingakapheli, amakhaphethi la azakuba esegalula ethulini, njalo kawalalutho lokuwahlanza ngalo ngaphandle kwemithanyelo yotshani esuka iqubule uthuli iphinde iluyekele luwele phezu kwawo njalo. Sekuphakathi kwemini enkulu. Amadoda la asehlubula izigqoko engena emabhatshini aqhezuke kabili ngemuva, afake izikhava ezinkanyazelayo azihambele kamnandi esehla lesitalada. Akukhathalekile ingabe kuyatshisa kumbe liyana. Angena uSolobhoni.

Kwenye ibhawa esendaweni ecatshileyo amadoda ansundu ahlabela konke enelisa ukukukhumbula ngalesiyana isikhathi laphe uSatchmore owaphonguthi thutshu phakathi kwawo, wathatha ingoma yawo, ingoma yawo, uSkokiyana, wayihluthuna emilonyeni yawo wayiyekela yageleza emithanjeni yakhe njengegazi, igazi lawo. Isimanga salokho! Isimanga esingunaphakade. Yeka ukuyithanda kwawo. Amadoda akoBulawayo ayayihlabela njalo emabhawa awo akhanyiswe kalufifi, ayamangala ukuthi kambe lokho asakukhumbulayo kwenzakala ngeqiniso, uma kuliqiniso, kambe azithinta sibili ingalo lemikhono yaleya ndoda emangalisayo, lowo Satchmore? Indlwana engaphansi kwendlu. Yikamelu elimnyama tshu njalo elitthonta amanzi sonke isikhathi, likamelu elingaphansi kwenye yamawotela amahle okwamagama ekuSolobhoni, likamelu lokugcinela imbodlela zotshwala ezingelalutho kanye lamabhokisi okufaka lezo

mbodlela kanye lezingqamu zokudlisa ezingasasetshenziswayo, indawo lapho okungena khona izisebenzi ezinsundu kuphela; kulapha akholisa khona njalo azidele, akholisa kusukela phakathi kwamabili kuze kube emadabukakusa.

Iphupho lizala elinye iphupho. Intuthu ithunqa intambama yonke ivale yonke inkulumo njalo ifiphaze lombono. Amangilazi otshwala la awaqhubelanayo ngamangilazi okuzenzela, alungiswa ngokuthatha imbodlela zotshwala ziqunywe phakathi laphakathi kube sekusiba yingilazi yokunathela. Utshwala buyachitheka emathireyini njalo bubanjwe ngothando olukhulu phakathi kwendololwane lesifuba. Buchithekela phakathi kwezitulo ezimfitshane lezinde phakathi kwemithunzi elithanga edalwa yizibane zepharafini ezihlonywe emidulini lapha ezilenga khona zilokhu zizula zilenga zinjalo. Akulanto yalapha ehlala injalo kokuphela, ngitsho khona ukuzonda kumbe ukunakekelana, kuhlala kusiya le lale. Kuleyo ndawo ekhanya lufifi, indololwane, ukuxhawulana, kanye lamadolo kuqhaqhazela kusiya le ngemuva kwekamelolo, kuthi ntshobe kuhlale phansi, ngasikhathi sinye ukuzinikela lezithembiso kuyaphanjaniswa njalo kuguqulwe kungazange kuhlale okwesikhathi esingakanani njengempiko zemvevane zonezi ezinyathelwa zinyawo zawo. Ukhona othukayo. Ukuthuka lokhu kubakhona okwesikhatshana nje, kuthulisele njengoba phela nangu omunye utshaya umlozwi ehlabela ingoma emnanjana eqhubeka okwesikhatshana. Ingilazi iyawa ife. Iphansi selimanzi njalo selitshelale lapho utshwala buhlangana lengcekeza lesamende kanye lezicucu zengilazi. Amehlo asenzima njalo asebomvu gebhu ngenxa yentuthu, amazwi ahlabelela phansi, asethula njalo kungathi kukhona okungaqeda ukulahlekelwa lithemba njalo kuguquke kube yinto yomuntu lemfihlo yakhe. Akhulumela phansi ngamazwi abantu abathenekileyo. Asedakiwe: ubusuku, intuthu, umculo, konke kulwisana lemizwa yawo.

Owesifazana udonsa isiketi sakhe esifitshane esehlisa ezama ukulala amadolo akhe. Amasokisi akhe amade awagqokileyo adabukile esuka khonale phezu kusiya fika ezithende, kodwa ngubani

okukhangelayo lokhu kule indawo ekhanya luvilibana, okulothando olungayi ndawo, yena akufunayo yikuzwa nje ukuthi ugqoke ama-sokisi amade kuphela. Uhambisa ukhalo lwakhe lamasokisi akhe lawo adonseke aze afika emazwaneni. Itafula eyindingilizi eyamapulanka ime yaqina ngokusekelwa ngephephandaba eligoqwe lafakwa ngaphansi kolunye unyawo lwemilenze yayo emine, iphezulu yayo seyalolongeka ngenxa yezandla ezihlala ziyibambabamba. Kulendoda egoqe ingalo zayo yazibeka phezulu kwetafula. Iminwe yayo ilengele ekucineni kwetafula, izandla ziyalenga nje njalo iphansi liseduze. Ithe nhlo kowesifazana lo, esiketini lesi, emadolweni la. Kayikhulumi lutho. Kayifuni lutho. Imyekela enjalo. Uma engenelisa, uzayithanda loba sekutheni. Zonke insuku ebusuku iba lapha, ibukele. Nxa ingekho lapha iyabe icabanga ngokuba lapha. Umehluko okhona endlini lapha uyayikhanga, ukusuduka kwesihlalo sinye ngasinye, ukumpimpana, ukuxubana kwamazwi, lentuthu ezungeza amadolo. Ihotsha amakha asuka endololwaneni yowesifazana lo. Isondeza isihlalo sayo eduze. Eduze sibili. Uyananzelela ukwenza kwayo laye aguqule ukuyikhangela kwakhe. Uthatha umlenze wakhe awugaxe phezu komunye. Umlenze wakhe wesokudla. Ukhangela kuhle phansi, ngaphansi kwetafula. Uzwane lwakhe luthinta idolu layo. Owesifazana uhlaba ngendololwane yakhe engekho phakathi kwesigqoko phezu kwetafula efithizela ngamandla sibili, eseduze sibisibili kodwa engayithintanga. Uhloma isandla sakhe kwesinye. Indololwane igotshisiwe.

Kuleqembu labahlabeleli ebelitshaya ingoma kodwa lihlabelela phansi, lihlabelela lilaphana esitubhini kwelinye ikhona lekamelo. Umkhokheli weqembu ubuyela emuva kancane ahlale phansi. Ugqoke iyembe eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka lebhulugwe eliyinevi, ithayi eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka. Ngelizwi lakhe eliqatha, ukhulumela phansi kuhle nje athi Lithe uLouis na... uLouis Armstrong... Uyasukuma. Utshaya ithirampethi. Utshaya ingoma yakhe uSkokiyana uLouis esengqondweni yakhe, amehlo ambona ngawo ngomcabango nje lapho emi esandleni sakhe senxele, ngaphansi kwalesiya sibane esikhanya

kalufifi lokunuka kwesibane sepharafini. Njalo wonke umuntu lapha uyavuma ukuthi ye, ngempela wayetshaya loLouis, akulakuthandabuza ngalokho. UnguSatchmore sibili, pho-ke kutshoni, angayatshaya esekamelweni eliphezulu esitezi ekamelweni likaMongameli? Ilizwe leli likhatshana lolwandle, liyadabuka. Impi iphakathi kwabo. Isiporo esisuka eBeira sisiya e-Umtali sabhonjwa. Ngempela angeke atshaye ephezulu esitezi, kodwa kusobala ukuthi uzama ukukhwela isitimela leso aye lapho esiqonda khona, useseqa umzila lowana, njalo ithirampethi yakhe iyakhazimula ngaphansi kwesibane lesiyana esikhanya kaluvilibana; amehlo usewadonse sengathi uyisiphofu.

Bafuna ukuthi azwakale ngaphezulu - khonale. Lolu yilo usuku bonke abalulindeleyo. Hatshi ukuthi uSatchmo abuye, njalo aphinde ahambe, njalo adlale ingoma yabo uSkokiyana ebatshiya belephika njalo sebemhlotshana, kodwa bafuna ukuthi indoda le ihambise izifiso zabo ngaphezulu - khonale. Hatshi ukuvala inhlungu zabo ngezingowane, njengalokho, hatshi ukuvala ithirampethi yabo ngengowane, njengalokho. Ngempela, kukhona okunye okuyikho sibili abafuna ukukukholisa, phezulu laphana, hatshi ubutifitifi bonke lobo obusezihlalweni, lamalembu wonke lawo athungelwe ekhethenini, kabawafuni wonke lawo amavinqovinqo asekhethenini lelo.... kabalasifiso sokuba lakho lokho. Abakufunayo kuphela yikuthi bafike njalo baphume bazihambe ngokuthanda kwabo. Mhla kufika uzibuse, bafuna nje ukuthi bangene laphayana, njalo baphume, ngokuthanda kwabo, hatshi ukungena bentshontsha kumbe ukulunguza, kodwa bafisa ukungena njalo baphume, ngokuthanda kwabo. Bangahlala bengekho lapha uma kungavunyelwa, ukuthi bangene njalo baphume, ngokuthanda kwabo. USatchmo.

Idolobho leli lakhiwe ngendlela eyenza imigwaqo yeqane. USolobhoni uhlangana njalo eqane lesitalada uMain, izakhiwo lapho-ke zibumba ikhona elibukhali sibili, umumo lo uyaphindwa kuzo zonke indawo lapha imigwaqo yeqana khona, yonke indawo usehla ngoSolobhoni uze uyefika emaVinkilini e-Ascot, lapho okulesakhiwo eside ukwedlula zonke edolobheni, kutsholobela kuze kucine lapho

okufika khona ilihlo. Indoda egqoke iwovolosi elombala oyi-orenji ithanyela isitalada ekhoneni ilandela uMain, eduze lesakhiwo okuthiwa yiDouslin House. Ilamadlabuzane okusebenza. Masinyazana nje isibuthe yonke ingcekeza esitaladini, izivalo zezimbodlela, imigodla yamapulastiki, amaphepha, amakhasi ezithelo konke iyakugwegwa ngomthanyelo ikusondeza eduze kwayo sekuze kwaba ngokuyinqunjana, ibe isikhothama ikubuthe ngezandla zayo ezin-gagqokiswanga lutho, isukume iyethululela ephepheni lezibi elibotshelwe egabheni elilamavili eliseceleni kwayo. Indebe zayo ziyanyakaza. Izunguza izandla. Iyema iphumule. Iyathalaza khonapha ekhona idinga iphepha elingabe likhuthekile liphephuka lodwa idinga sengathi idinga umqondo oyilahlekeleyo kodwa ingatholi lutho. Iyakhangela njalo, itshede ime eceleni, ikhangela isusa emazwaneni isiyafika emahlombe, ihambisa indebe zayo ezithuleyo. Yesula intshiya zayo. Intshiya zayo kuphela, isesula ngalapho okucina khona iminwe yesandla sokudla. Yehlisa iminwe ize ifike esibambeni eside somthanyelo. Isibambo somthanyelo seyeme ehlobo layo lenxele. Iyema inganyikinyeki. Umzimba wayo uthulisile. Iminwe yayo kuphela yiyo enyakazayo. Itshayatshaya phansi ngonyawo. Ngokuthula. Phezu kwawo umthanyelo. Ngothando. Izimota ziyedlula. Yinye ngayinye. Zidlula ngokuphangisa. Isuka ihambe engathi ibalekela isithunzi sayo, iyasuka ethareni ime esitubhini. Khathesi isisendaweni ephakemeyo ngaphansi kwevurandi eliphezulu, iseduze komduli wendlu, kayisekho esitaladini uMain kanti njalo kayakabi ku-Solobhoni sibili. Imi lapha kuleli ikhona, umzimba wayo uphazamisekile kancane.

Idolobho ligxile ezindaweni eziphetha engathi sezifike eliweni, imigwaqo yeqana iqonde nta. Emini imithunzi iqonde nta njalo mide. Izitalada zibanzi. Zibanzi kakhulu lapha ezeqana khona. Kuleli idolobho lapha okuphelela khona isakhiwo kuba ngumbukiso, ikhona... ekhoneni. Ibala leli liphunyiswa indebe zenziwe zaba yisikhwama, njalo lengqondo eculayo, ingalo zidikiza, lemicabango ecela isikhathi. Ekhoneni, batshonjalo, becela ukuthi bayekethise, ukuthi bazwisiswe.

Ikhona lesakhiwo uyalizwa langeminwe, limahadlahadla, iziqephu zesamende. Lapho uqonda ekhoneni, ufika ujike uqonde kwelinye icele. Ukuhamba lokhu kuchasisa umzimba, kuwubumbe masinyane nje ngendlela eyisimanga. Ingqe yini ingaba ngale kwekhona. Uyajika ube usubona ukukhanya okutsha, akuselanto engabonakali kuhle. Usumude ngangalezi izakhiwo ezimila phansi. Ukhona kule indawo njengesikhathi, uphelele, inhliziy o etshayayo ngeyakho, ukuphefumula kwakho kukhudumeza izindebe zakho, uphila ngawo lo umzuzu, ngeqiniso njalo ungahataniswa. Ekhoneni. Umkhandlo okubonisa kude, uSolobhoni, utsholobela esuka ebunzini lakho atsholobele esiyafika ezinkanyezini. Ukwesaba kwakho kundenda phezu kwe-sikhumba sakho, njengento ongayithinta.

Ekhoneni yindawo lapha okuhlanganwa khona. Lingeke lahlangana phakathi kwenye yalezi zindlu ngoba phela idolobho leli lehlukanisiwe, amadoda ansundu lamanina ansundu kawavunyelwa ukungena phakathi, lihlangana ngaphandle kwezindlu, hatshi emnyango lemavurandini angena phakathi, hatshi ngaphansi kwamawindi alophahla, kumbe ngaphi nje kodwa ekhoneni. Lapha ungamayima, kungaqedakali ukuthi wenzani, umi kokuphela njengesikhathi. Ungodlulayo. Ikhona yindawo esithekileyo, indawo yamacebo; indawo yokwethula izikhalazo. Ekhoneni njalo yindawo eyingozi, lapho izingqamu eziphonguthutsha nje ngokuphazima kweso njengombani. Ukufa kungafika ngokuphangisa lapho izamba zemali lezikhwama zabomama zihluthunwa, zilahlelwe khatshana, izamba zikhuthuzwe konke okuphakathi kwazo. Ikusasa iseduze, njalo ngesikhatshana isikhohlakele.

Kusemini enkulu. Indoda ithwala ingowane iyehlisile, ikepesi idon-swe yathi mpa yatshekiswa yavala ilihlo lesokudla. Igqoke ibhatshi layo eselijujukile njalo elibambayo, eselidlekile endololwaneni, lidonsekele phansi kwelinye icele lidonswa ngenye into enzima es-esikhwameni, kungaba yithotshi, isambuleni esigoqiweyo kumbe olunye ulutho olwaziwa yiyo kuphela. Lowo ehamba laye ulokhu ezunguza ikhanda lakhe lisiya emuva laphambili ngendlela eletha

ukuhambelana, iminwe yakhe uyihlome phakathi kwamadolo akhe agotshisiweyo, ukhalisa iminwe yakhe - le yiyona ndlela amanye amaqiniso adalwa ngayo, phakathi kwesithupha lenkomba. Umsindo lo wodwa ulumathisa ithemba elikhulu ukwedlula usizi.

Indoda ethwele ikepesi evale amakhala ayo iphendula ikhanda layo ekhoneni ikhangele le khatshana idingisisa. Ingxenywe engaphansi eyamabheqe eyembe yayo ingamakhona amathathu akhombele ece- leni, umphetho wamabheqe udabukile. Ikhlabakhaba umduli idlala ngesicathulo esesidabuke kakhulu, masinya, ngokuphangisa, langesi- fiso esikhulu. Izizwa amandla. Ibuyela emuva. Iyaphenduka ifulathele umduli, yeyame. Iyaphumputha esikhwameni sebhathshi layo iphume lesiqa sempompi yebhayisikili isise ezindebeni zayo ezikhamisileyo. Iqala ihlikihle indebe zayo isebenzisa ingemuva yesandla kusuka es- ihlakaleni kusiyafika esithupheni, kunkomba. Igobisa amahlombe ayo iwassusa emdulini. Ivuthela phakathi kweminwe egoqiweyo kungathi ivuthela phakathi kwethambo, umsindo obukhali ulandela umzimba wayo lapho itshelela isehla ngomduli wesakhiwo, izizwa ilula. Yanga umhlabathi ngomzimba wayo ocikizekileyo. Ibhathshi layo seliyin- qumbi phansi. Umsindo ovalwe ngesandla uyalandela usuka ekuci- neni kwesicathulo sayo, njengesithunzi. Lowo okade ehamba layo usenyamalele.

Ekhoneni. Lapha, uthando luyakhula kumbe lubhidlike lapho izithandani zihlangana. Injongo yokuhlangana ngeyokwenza kube sobala ukuthi ngubani phakathi kwezithandani ongumasinda, ngubani olomqondo othuleyo - ngubani osehlaelwe zinhlu pho, oyindlela yokuletha ukuxolelana, njalo ngubani owethesa omunye icala, ongum- dali wamaqhinga okuba lecala.

Indoda ima kwelinye icele lesakhiwo ekucineni kwaso, kanti ngasikhathi sinye, kwelinye icele, kulandela lapha okuphelela khona umduli, owesifazana ulindele laye; indololwane zomunye lomunye wabo ziphezu komduli, iminwe yabo iyadinga, abalaqiniso, iyabhoda ngale komduli, ithintane kodwa bengabambani izandla. Sekubalun-

gele bubili babo bazathola indlela yokunyomuka, bahambe kancane, imicabango yabo ikhatshana. Kungenzakala, omunye wabo abhode lekhona aze ahlange lomunye wakhe, masinya nje, engakasuki ahambe anyamalale. Isandla sowesifazana sihamba kancane sikhwela lengalo yowesilisa njalo abe esembamba emgogodlela. Kungathi se-bevumelene bubili babo, bayaqhubeka ndawonye, beyizithunzi ezimbili. Kanengi bajayele ukugcina indawo yabo, ekhoneni. Belindle nje kuphela, besazi kamlhophe ukuthi ukhona omunye olindeleyo laye ngakwelinye icele. Umbala uyaphakama emdulini, uphinde wehle njalo. Ihlombe leyame libuyela emuva. Isithende sihlikihlelwa emdulini. Kuthi kunjalo, sekungathi baphendula umlozwi ozwakale ngokuphangisa nje, bubili babo, indoda lowesifazana, basuka bahambe beqonda endaweni ezitshiyeneyo. Basuka bazule bahambe engekho ozizwa elecala, baye khatshana. Badlulisele phambili ukuthi bazinikele njalo bavuma ukuba esilingweni sokuphuza. Kabatshiyi lutho olutshengisa ukuthi bebelapha. Hatshi lapha. Kukhona okunye okwenzakalayo, obunye ubuhlungu obuphangisayo, mhlawumbe ingoma edlalela ezindebeni, enhle, njengesifiso.

Izithandani ziyehlukana njalo njalo. Ziqhubekela phambili, amakhanda esemoyeni sekungathi kazizange kezihlangane, sengathi munye ngamunye wazo angalawula ukuhamba kwelanga, kodwa-ke munye ngamunye wabo uyasizwa isizungu sokungabikhona komunye. Nxa selithophela endlebeni, ilizwi libabuthakathaka njengesikhumba.

Kubo bobabili ukwehlukana yinto angazange ayitsho owesilisa, into angazange ayitsho lowesifazana, kungeke kwabayinto abayitshiloyo munye ngamunye wabo, abengeke ayitsho owesilisa esizwa amakha elokhu ephela kancane kancane engalweni yakhe engavinjwa yilutho, elokhu ekhumbula ukuphefumula kowesifazane okufudumalayo. Hatshi-bo. Iminwe yabo ithintene. Kubo, ukwehlukana kumele kube ngamazwi angakhulunywayo phakathi kwabo, ukwesaba kokwazi ukuthi okungakhulunywanga, kuzahlala kunjalo kungakhulunywanga, ngemva kwesikhathi eside konke okunye sekukhulunyiwe. Ukuthula kuyabehlukanisa, kodwa bayakhumbula; amazwi abo azingela ukudla.

Kuyini lokho owesilisa akukhulume kuye owesifazana mayelana lokuyathatha umfanekiso ko-African Photo Studio eseSitaladini uLobengula lo 11 Avenyu? Yena owesifazana ufuna ukuya koKay's Photo Studio eseSitaladini uJameson lapho abakunika khona isibuko esincinyane usiphathe ngesinye isandla, kuthi kwesinye bakunike ingilazi yewayini ngasikhathi sinye bekuthatha umfanekiso wena uzimele mpo, isikhathi laso simi mpo, konke ukuzilungiselela kwakho okuthethe iviki yonke kuwela entendeni yesandla sakho kalula nje njengokufika kwokuseni, umfanekiso wakho nanko usuphambili kwakho ngokuphelela kwawo. Ukhangeleka kuhle sibili, idolobho liyingxenye yakho. Ukuphakama kwengalo yakho kugogela sonke isimo sedolobho.

KoStar Photo Studio, yonale engale kwakoKay's Studio, bakhulalisa esihlalweni esiphezulu ufulathele ikhamera babe sebesithi uphathe isibuko usiphakamise sifike ehlombe lakho, babe sebesithi phendula ikhanda lakho kancane libuyele emuva othatha imifanekiso aze athi mana, ube ususenza njalo, uqondise intamo yakho ithi mpo, kumbe okunye okunjalo, kuphume imifanekiso yakho emibili, ngakho imali yakho iyabe isebenzile ngempela, phela ngemuva kwakho emfanekisweni lo kulesikepe okutshengisa ukuthi kawukho edolobheni elikhatshana lolwandle okufana lalokho okuyikho khona elizweni lonke. Owesifazana ufuna ukubona isikepe leso kanye lalolo lwandle olubanzi lapha umzimba wakhe ozenela khona undende njalo uzakuba ekhatshana lalapho aseke aba khona yena ngokwakhe, abe ngumuntu osehahamba amazwe amanengi njengalokho okufakazwa yikhamera. Kalaqiniso ngoba ulokhu engakaze afike koStar Photo Studio. Kodwa uzafika khona. Nxa engafikanga khona lowesilisa lo, uzafika lomunye. Bayehlukana okupheleleyo sibili, esazi lokhu kuphela.

Abakwaziyo ngokupheleleyo ngezinhliziyi zabo bubili babo yizinto eziphikisanayo. Bobabili bakhumbula ngothando amathuba abalahlekelayo, amathuba afana lemililo efudumalayo. Bagogodlela ingozi ngobuthakathaka benhliziyi, bayakuthanda ukungabi leqiniso nje ngendlela abathanda ngayo ukutshaya kwamathonsi ezulu phezu

kopahla lwamazenge; njengendlela abathanda ngayo ukuthulisa okun-gaphelelanga ngemva kokukhala kwensimbi yesonto. Bathanda indlela izinto ezinyamalala ngayo: inina eliphefuzelayo.

Bayakuthanda ukuzwa amazwi abo bephupha, bephupha iminwe yabo ibambabamba imizimba yabo. Bayakuthanda ukuthi imikhum-bulo yabo isabalale iye kude, isabalale njengengalo. Baxwaya izin-dawo eziphezulu nxa besenelisa, bahlale endaweni ephansi.

Ingowane zithwalwa luhleko olundenda lusehla, zibanjwe ngom-phetho ngaphansi kweziketi zabesifazana eziphephukayo, ingowane, eziphoswe njengensiba, njengezinto ezithakazelwayo, usuku lufit-shane kakhulu, lufitshane kakhulu njengokutshibilika kwengowane yendoda iwela engalweni ezingelalutho.

Batshiya idolobho, lapha, lapha owesifazana omayima ekhoneni lesitalada, ingalo zakhe zisindwa yibhasikiti egcwele izithelo, isi-bambo esitshelelayo sebhasikiti sithandelwe ngelembu. Uyema, ib-hasikiti isenyaweni zakhe, afinqe ibunzi, mhlawumbe ecabanga isehlakalo esibi esake samehlela, emangala ukuthi kungabe kuyini akhohlwe ukukukhumbula, nxa kuyikuthi kuvele kukhona. Ubhula isiketi sakhe ngezandla engathi uthintitha itshebetshebe kuthi ngasikhathi sinye umhlambi wabantu uhaluzele usedlula uqonda esi-taladini uLobengula, usedlula ungazange umuthi tshazi nje kodwa. Lapha esezilungisele udumela ibhasikiti yakhe, asuke ahaluzele aqonde esitaladini uLobengula; okulamazwi aminyezelanayo, imiz-imba eminyezelanayo lamatamatisi achithekayo ezinqumbi echithekela esitubhini, okulephunga lamagwava elihlangane lomnuko wamavili amiswa ngemiqobotsho. 'Tshova! Tshova!' Ilizwi lizwakala liklabalala njalo kuyaminyezelwana kungenwa emoteni esigcwale yedlulisa amalawulo esuka ngesivinini esikhulu iphuma idolobho.

Uma ungajika usuka kuSolobhoni ungena esitaladini uGrey uqonde entshonalanga, ulakho ukutshayela imota uhambe sibili uze uphume ungazange ujike kwesenxele kumbe kwesokudla, uhambe uze uyefika ezintabeni zendulo ezeMatopo, lawo matshe angathi ayawa afika elizweni leGulati, udlule lapho uye eKezi. EKezi: indawo enga-

makhilomitha angamakhulu amabili usuka eWoteleni yeSolobhoni okuphithizela khona izambuleni ezincinyazana ziminyezelana lezim-bamgodi ezingasuthisekanga, izisebenzi zemabhenki, kanye labaqlhuba amabhizimusi, lapha okuphithizela khona abaqhuba imisebenzi yezandla. Lapha, umfana othwala izincwadi, ethwele amathelegiramu, lezincwadi zeposo zalelolanga ufika alinde ephandle kuze kube lo-muntu ombonayo amethule izincwadi lezo.

ISAPHLUKO SESIBILI

IKEZI YINDAWO ESEMAPHANDLENI. Eduze kwayo kulamaqaqa eGulati.

Nxa usuka eKezi uyabe usuka emhlabathini wokulima owendlaleke okwamagama. Kulenkalakatha zamatshe, kube lamaqaqa kulandelwe ngumhlaba ohamba udundubala usehla uhambo lonke lwebhasi uze uqale ukubona iBulawayo ile khatshana isikubiza. Nxa kusebusuku, izibane zedolobho ziqala ukubonakala zinkanyazela kungathi ziy-ingxenye yomkhathi.

Umgwaqo osuka koBulawayo usiya eKezi uqonda nta esitolo sakoThandabantu lapho ibhasi efika iphelele khona ibe isiphenduka ibuyela edolobheni. Phambili kwesitolo sakoThandabantu le, izindlu zisabalala ngokufanayo ngapha langapha komgwaqo, uphahla lwazo olotshani luphansi kakhulu okwenza zikhanye engathi zidilikela phansi, zibhazalala phezu kwemiduli yomdaka. Ubufitshane bopahla lwazo luzenza zikhanye zingathi zithinta inhlabathi, lokhu kwenza izindlu lezi ziqande kamnandi. Imiduli yazo ibonakala angathi isim-fitshane, isifinyezwe luphahla lotshani sekuhlangana lomthunzi wayo ngaphansi. Izindlu lezi zikhanya sengathi zendlalekile okwenza ukuthi lapha uzikhangele ukhatshana zibonakale ziyizigombolosi ezinhle ezibambane lomhlabathi, imiduli yazo ibalazwe yaba mihle. Izulu lingana amanzi aqala eme okwesikhatshana etshanini bophahla, kawahle agijime nje aye phansi. Ngemva kokuna kwezulu, utshani obumanzi

obungaphezulu ngaphandle kophahla, njalo obungathi sebukhuntile, bulephungana elithambileyo, ezintweni eziphilayo buyimpilo ngokwayo. Utshani obude obomileyo bumi phakathi kwezihlahla ezithe gqa gqa lapha lalaphaya, sebubomvana njengomhlabathi njalo bumi bunganyikinyeki njengomoya lo otshisayo; kuthule cwaka. Kulamat-she ami phakathi kwezihlahla, kungathi agiqika eceleni elandela okungamaqaqana. Khatshana le izihlahla zikhula zidlulisa amalawulo ngaphansi kwenkalakatha yedwala elendlalekileyo; elidundubeleyo, ingemuva yalo ephakama kungathi izathinta isibhakabhaka; umhlaba lapha ulidwala. Ngaphansi kwamadwala amakhulu kulamanzi. Kuthi kunjalo, nanso isihlahla sendlale ingatsha zaso phezu kwenkalakatha yelitshe. Isihlahla sinamathele sagoqela ilithe ngempande zaso ngaphansi, ezinkulu, ezibanzi, njalo ezibhadelwe phezu kwelitshe elibutshelazi, izimpande seziqine njengelitshe ngokwalo; bubili bakho kuyankanyazela kuyimpunganyana, kuxexebuka, kuqinile. Kuyo yonke indawo kulezixuku zameva.

Phakathi kwale imizi oyibonayo kuphuma okuyizindledlana okuzombazombayo kusuka komunye umuzi kungena komunye, kusiya emfuleni; kusiya emgwaqweni. Amatshekazi amade aqinileyo ahlezi phezu komhlaba owendlalekileyo abonakala ethutsha ngaphezu kwezindlu ezimi ndawonye ezisabalala indawo yonke zisiba yimizi zisehlukaniswa kuphela ngamasimu amakhulu angalinywanga lutho, njalo kulandela ukukhanya okutsholobela kusiya le okwembese ukusa kwelanga. Umumo lo uguqulwa yikubakhona kwezindlu ezilutshwane ezakhiwe ngezitina ezibonakala yonke indawo; zisabalele, izindlu ezifulelwe ngama-asibhesita. Umhlaba usuka wehle okwesikhatshana usehlela esihotshaneni esincinyane, phambidlana ngaphansi ngale, khatshana lamasimu, izihlahla lapha zinde kulezinye. Khatshana le, kodwa okufinyelela ilihlo, ngummango weGulati olamaqaqa abumba umkhathi wangempumalanga. Loba ukhangela ukhatshana, la ngamaqaqa aphakemeyo kakhulu, athutsha ngaphezu kwawo wonke amaqqa lamatshe eKezi, eginya umhlaba owagombolozelayo, ekuhuga. Nsukuzonke ekuseni ilanga likhwela kancane kancane nge-

muva kwalawo maqaqa njalo liphosa insaba zalo ezifohla ekusithekeni zibomvu. Kuyabe sekukhanya okupheleleyo ilanga lingakabonakali lonke ngaphezulu kwalawo maqaqa amade aweGulati, emini enkulu liyabe selisenkanda yendoda, kusuka lapho seliyatshona-ke kuhle selisemhlabeni owendlalekileyo, lapha umhlabathi ohlangana khona lesibhakabhaka, eKezi, ngakuleliya elinye icele elomkhathi wamatshe entaba obanzi okwamagama. Ebusuku umehluko lo ubonakala kuhle sibili; kwelinye icele inkanyezi zinyamalala ngokuphangisa zingena emnyameni oqatha okwamagama ongangenekiyo odalwe ngamatshe, kanti ngakwelinye icele uba lemiswa efana leyomuntu ohamba phezu kwenkanyezi ngokwazo, isibhakabhaka siseduze okokuthi ingqondo kuba sengathi iyandenda emoyeni, isidakwe ngumumo ongummangaliso okwamagama. Umnyama uyahamba; isibhakabhaka lomhlabathi akusehlukaniseki.

Isitolo sakoThandabantu silenga ekucineni komgwaqo ozombazombayo njalo ohamba izimota ezinengi, umgwaqo weKezi-Bulawayo, lapha umhlaba osuka wehle ungalindelwe, ube ususendlaleka, simi khonapho lapho umgwaqo oqansa khona kakhulu usuka ebholohweni elingabanzi eliseMfuleni uKwakhe, umfula owomileyo khathesi. Iqiniso yikuthi, ibhasi igijima isuka koBulawayo isiya eKezi, ibe isibuyela koBulawayo. Kodwa ebhakaneni elincane elepulanka elilengiswe ewindini eliseduze kukakhondakitha iKezi yiyo eqalayo, njalo ezingqondweni zezakhamizi zeKezi, kusobala, iKezi yiyo eqalayo; ngakho-ke, ibhasi ibonakala ingegijima isuka eKezi isiya koBulawayo ibuyele eKezi, ikwenza nsukuzonke iviki yonke. Abanye balababantu sebake baya koBulawayo, njalo baya khona baphinde baphenduke, babuyele futhi ngokuthanda kwabo, abanye akukho abakuphuphayo ngaphandle kweBulawayo, kanti njalo abanye akwandanga ukuthi bake bakhumbule ngokutshiya iKezi.

Uma uMfula uKwakhe ugcwele, ibhasi iyehluleka ukuchapha ibholoho, iyamelela, abantu babe sebeqeda ilanga lonke, mhlawumbe lengxenywe yobusuku, belindele bekwelinye icele, begcine impahla zabo abazigogosayo abavela lazo edolobheni, belalele umfula

uholoba. Amanzi ayabe etshaya phezulu kwebholoho lingabonakali ngitsho engathi vele kalizake libekhona. Umfula lo uyaphangisa ukwetsha sonke isikhathi kungakhathalekile ukuthi ubugcwele kangakanani, amanzi axotshana lamatshe anyamalale phansi le, engena emhlabathini, etshona - ukwetsha kwamanzi la, enyamalala etshona phansi kwetshebetshebe kuyisimanga, kakuzwisiseki - inhlabathi imunya wonke amanzi. Masinyazana nje umfula uyehla, kuphele ukuzombazomba; usunciphile, wamncane. Amanzi aseleyo ageleza kangcane ayethela emfuleni obanzi njalo ongatshi masinyane, uMfula uNyandu, khatshana le, usuwedlule Umthetho, kuleliya dwala eliqini-leyo elikhatshana, elikhulu, lapha amakhehla aya khona ukuyaphumula, njalo afele khona, ngokuthula. Okwesikhathi eside belingekho izulu elinengi elina umfula ugcwale kuvaleke ibholoho, izulu kalisathembekanga, lina ngezikhathi ezingaqedakaliyo, sengathi liyaxolisa. Umfula sewatshiswa lilanga kakhulu okokuthi usungenelisa ukuwupima ngokubala inhlamvu zetshebetshebe ezinkanyazelayo langanani labantwana abagcwala kuwo njengenyosi.

Abafana abancinyane bagijima esihlabathini sawo esibuthakathaka ngenyawo ezingafakwanga lutho, isihlabathi esifudumalayo singena phakathi kwamazwane abo njalo beseqa bewela ezandleni zabosowabo, ngenjabulo yabo, lamazwi abo aklabalale ayetshaya ekhunjini lomfula olulolongekileyo njalo olungelalutho. Isihlabathi sonalesi sesigcwele ingcekeza yemigodlana engelalutho eyako Willards Potato Chips - aloqhatshi lwehanyanisi, aleviniga, lalesawudo. Kukhona njalo lembodlela zekhokhakhola ezifileyo, zicijile njalo ziyingozi, amabhokisi awamaphepha abomvu angelalutho athwala ilitha eyodwa eyotshwala beChibuku. Kulephunga lomthambiso elisuka kuwo wonke amatshe aseduze. Abantwana bathatha imigodlana yepulastiki engelalutho esuka ko-O.K. Bazars koBulawayo, bayigqibe ngamaphephandaba bayenze ibe ngamabhola njalo baklabalale bejabula bewakhaba esiyaphezulu, bengakhabi amabhola wodwa kodwa lesihlabathi somfula uKwakhe, besikhaba siqonga sisedlula amahlombe abo, siqonga sisedlula amakepesi ahlonywe emabunzini abo,

amakepesi abasanda kuwathola evela ezitolo zakoToppers.

Amakepesi la bawaphiwa kungelambadalo bewaphiwa ngowesifazana omude ofika evela edolobheni ehamba ngemota eyiveni elombala okhazimulayo okwamagama; ugqoka isiketi esibomvu esiyipeniseli, lezicathulo ezilezithende ezinde okwenza zitshone esihlabathini somfula, ngakho sekumele agobele phambili ukuze ahambe, ufaka lamangilazi okuvalela ilanga emehlweni, amangilazi la afiphele kakhulu okwenza ukuthi bangaze babona amehlo akhe. Ufika atshiye ezitolo amayunifomu ekhaxhi awabafana abaleminyaka esuka kweyisithupha kusiya kwelitshumi lane, ukuze athengiswe. Amathayi awatshiya lapho abhalwe ngaphansi igama elithi "Toppers Store". Izigqoko zilengiswe ngensinjana zokulengisa izigqoko ezifakwe engwegwaneni ezibethelwe emdulini. Imizila yokugoqwa kwawo ilokhu ikhona, lapha okuthungwe khona kwenziwa izikhexe ezivulekileyo kuquma imikhono, kuqine kwathi nko ngokufakwa isitatshi esengezelelwe amandla. Abafana ngokweyisa amayembe la baphinde bawakhangele ngamehlo alemibuzwana ethile.

Iveni isuka ihambe ithunquza uthuli olwesabekayo kodwa loba kunjalo abafana baxotshana layo, bekwenza kungelasizatho ngitsho, bekwenzela nje ukutshengisa ukuthi kabathulanga njalo kabehlulwanga, kungayisikho ukuthi bayazehlisa kumbe ukuthi kabazi lutho, kungayisikho ukuthi ngabantu abaphonguhlala nje bengenzi lutho kodwa balamandla kakhulu njalo bayesabeka, kabisibantwana nje, kodwa batsho ubukhona babo ngokuzinikela, belezinyawo ezingabathwala zibase ingqe kungaphi lapho abaqonde khona ngokuthanda kwabo, besenza ngokwemvelo njalo belenjabulo abayilawulayo, ngakho bayagijima bevula amanyathelo amade kakhulu, bewela phansi, phansi sibili phezulu kwebholoho, njalo babukele iveni itshona iphinda iqansa ngesiqubu esikhulu ukudlula lokho okungakhunjulwa yimicabango yabo, isuka lapho yengeze isiqubu lokuphithizela okusuka kubaginye bephelele benjalo. Bayiphakamisela izandla bezizunguza emoyeni. Bame. Sebesangene ingqondo. Bawisa amakepesi abo. Baphinde bawadobhe njalo ethulini.

Abafana baqoqa imicabango yabo basesule uthuli emakhaleni, njalo bahogele umoya besizwa umnuko wawo lokumangalisa kwawo. Basuka lapho bahlale phansi emaphethelweni omfula owome qha bephethe ireza zabo zakoMadeleine bezibambe zaqina ngeminwe yabo, baciye amapeniseli abo, ngesikhatshana nje sebegcwalise um-sizi wepeniseli phezu kwamadolo abo, ireza ebukhali ikhutha ipeniseli ikhephuze isikhumba somunwe, kodwa laba bafana, ngezibindi zabo, bakhetha ukungananzi lobu buhlungu obuncane njalo bayaqhubeka, endaweni yalokhu, basuka babhale ngemuva kwamabhuku abo okubhalela adabukileyo ingqe yini ezifikela kalula emicabangweni yabo, babhala bechasisa, indlwana yefoni elombala oluhlaza okumhlotsana esanda kubekwa lapho kodwa engakabi lalokho okusetshenziswa ukukhuluma lapha ufuna ukutshaya ifoni.

Indlwana eluhlaza yefoni. Yenela abantu ababili, bemi, besithekile enkanyezini, lokho yinto esobala; ngakho-ke ebusuku, izithandani ziyahlangana zinyenyezela imibiko, njalo zenza angathi kulesibanga esikhulu phakathi kwazo kodwa khona sibili okwehlukana imizimba yabo kungasilutho, kuyikunyenyeza nje qha, njalo kungekho sibili ngaphandle komnyama. Kulokho okukhona okwalo umtshina obe ubapha ithemba, basuka bahlohle kuwo imali yamatshe eyeRhodesia engasasebenziyo, amapeni ekhophela lamasheleni esiliva, bazame ukukhuluma ngamazwi atshiyeneyo besondeze eduze kwendlebe zabo; batsho ngelizwi elizondileyo njalo elihlanekelayo lapha bebiza u-Ian Smith kumbe bebiza iGeneva loMhlontshwa uzibanibani: be-sekusiba yilizwi elithobekileyo lapha sebekhuluma ezabo ezokuzithokozisa.

Amazwi abo angazinzanga okudlula umnyama, bayasondelelana se-beqale bathatha amapeni abo bawabeka lapha agcineke kuhle khona, amadolo abo alokhu ebambene, indebe zabo zibuthakathaka, ziyasondelelana ukwenzela ukuthi babeseduze laduze, ukuze amazwi abo avumelane, baphefumule ngokulinganayo, behotsha, inhliziyi zithshaya, bemangala ukuthi bangaqhubeka okwesikhathi esinganani bethulisile benje njalo becatshile, bemangala ukuthi bangagcwalisa

zonke lezo ezinye izithembiso ezidinga ukuthi kuse ukuze zibe liqiniso, njalo endaweni yalokho baphane lokho okulula ukuthi bakwenelise, amanoveli alotshwa nguNick Carter laka-Agatha Christie. Amanoveli abawemukwa ngabeMishini yeKunene bawaphosela emanineni amadala ukuthi abase ngawo umlilo wokuphekisa, kodwa asadojwa njalo asahlengwa yilaba abalutshwane abalambileyo, abafuna ukubala laloba yini into ebhaliweyo njalo engabalwa abantu bekujejisile besotha umlilo, ukubala nje okunye okungasiso sithupha sokuzalwa.

Kule indlwana yefoni eluhlaza, babambana izandla lapha obekumele kube lalokho okusetshenziswa lapho ukhuluma lomunye ngefoni, sebedinge okokukhulumisana ngakho, okokuthi uzwe, njalo bengatholanga lutho. Sebedinge intambo yefoni ekade izabaxhumanisa lenkaba yedolobho leBulawayo, kumbe iSozibeli, iGwelu, kumbe iGatooma, bengatholanga lutho. Sebedinge ibhuku lefoni lapha okubhalwe khona wonke amabizo abo njalo bathola elilodwa elibotshelwe kuleyo ndlu yefoni, elitshengisa amabizo abhalwe ngamabala amancinyane kanye lamakheli ezakhamizi zakoBulawayo kuphela, abantu abangaziwayo ngitsho njalo abangelalutho olungathokoza impilo yabo, njalo abaze bathola lutho olungolwabo. Ayikho iKezi, ayikho sibili iKezi yabo, kulalokhu nje okuyinto yokubagwabisela etshiywe phakathi kwabo ukubahleka ukuswela kwabo, ukuvusa amadlabuzane okulangazelela ulutho.

Ukuphuza kuyingxenye yokuphetha kwempilo yabo lapha eKezi. Lokhu yinto ejwayelekileyo. Njengomgwaqo wethara ophunguthi ciniyani esitolo sakoThandabantu njalo ungazabe usaya phambili; engathi kwakungasekho ukuthi ingqondo ingafuna ukuzula nje kuhle isiyakhatshana le, phambili le ukudlula lapho ilihlo elingabona khona. Ngempela, engathi kwakungeke kwafika engqondweni, emzimbeni, ukufuna nje ukuthi utsholobele ucatshe ungabe usabonwa. Umgwaqo ucina angathi umcandi waphelwa yimpahla yokwakha njalo kwakungasekho ayengakwenza ngaphandle kokuthi atshiye izinto

zikhonapha ezikhona, zilenga emoyeni, zimadlekedleke. Umgwaqo olandelayo lubhuqu nje kuphela olungayindawo, ngoba ngubani owaziyo okungale ekucineni kwawo, usuke unciphe kakhulu okokuthi imota ezimbili zingeke ziphambane. Kumele ukuthi amavili akwelinye icele emota yinye nganye anyathele emgwaqweni kuthi awakwelinye icele anyathele etshanini. Uthuli lusukuma luye phezulu lwedlule izihlahla lamatshe amakhulu. Nxa imota isiza ivela kwelinye icele ubona uthuli kuqala, hatshi imota. Imota ize ibonakale ngemva kwesikhathi; uthuli selwehlile, njalo lekusasa isiphose yafika.

Kumele balinde, izinyanga uma kusenzeka, belindele imota yefoni ukuthi ibuye njalo, isuka khonale koBulawayo, ilabatshe bayo abazi-bonakalisayo, abasanda kugqiba izifundo zabo zokuba ngomakanika bemitshina, bephakathi kwamawovolosi abo alombala we-orenji abamumuza iziwiji ezimunywana babe bekhafula amathe bekhafula emlilweni, inwele zabo ziqunywe kühle, zehlukene, bekhuluma ngomfutho ngoba bafunda ezikolo zabanali ezifana leDavid Livingstone eNtabazinduna. Abakwesabayo kuphela nguNkulunkulu, abantu bangamelana labo.

Ngokunjalo, indololwane zigxila phezu kwensimbi le ethwele izinombolo zakhona ezabhalwa phezu kwezikopelo lezo. Lo ngumsebenzi ongaphelanga, kusobala lokho. Kusenjalo, bathatha izinombolo zefoni ezamafekithali lawezindawo ezithengisa impahla zithengisela abezitolo asebakwe bazizwa; eBlue Ribbon Foods leSecurity Mills, i-Archer Shirts, eKaufman Shoes leGees Refrigeration - zonke lezo ndawo ezidingekayo edolobheni kodwa ebantwini beKezi zizindawo nje okusetshenzwa kuzo lapho umuntu angafika khona umalumakhe owalahleka kudala lezihlobo ezahamba ngebhasi yakoBulawayo kuzo zonke lezo nyanga ezedlulayo, njalo ezilokhu zingakaphenduki. Kazikabhali incwadi. Kazikathumeli mbiko. Sezadliwa lidolobho.

Khathesi isitolo sisithekile emehlweni engathi sisithwa ngumduli okhanyayo olokhu usibamnyama, inhlamvana zentuli zitshayana emoyeni zigide, zisabalale zindende. Insaba zelanga zihlaba zidlula

phakathi kwalo uthuli, njalo luyakhazimula. Amazwi ayazwakala esuka ebhasini, uhleko, abantu bebizana, isitolo siqala ukubonakala kancane kancane lapho uthuli lolu olubomvana ludedela phansi, imiduli yaso lophahla lwaso olufulelwe nge-asibhesita kubonakala kuqala engathi yinto edwetshwe ngamalahle, phakathi kwalolo thuli lapha okundenda khona isakhiwo lesi, kubonakala uphahla olun-gaphansi olufulelwe ngamazenge abomvu, lulamavinqovinqo, lukhanya ngaphambili lapha okuqala ukubonakala abantu bephakama evurandini kancane engathi bandenda belwisa ukuphuma emanzini. Uthuli olubomvana ludeda luwela phezu kwenkalo zamadoda, njalo indoda ekhothemeyo isisithekile, kayisabonakali, ingalo yayo ephakanyisiweyo yiyo kuphela ebonakalayo, njengendoda egalulayo. Umoya ubumba inkungu eqatha, ephandlayo.

Luhamba kancane kancane, uthuli lolu. Ludeda kancane kancane lungavela luvukuzwe. Amazwi azwakala ekhwela ngaphezulu kom-sindo wamavili ebhasi, ngaphezu kwalowo msindo webhasi odabula indlebe lapho ibhasi ilwisa ukuqansa ibholoho, khonokho nje isitolo sesikhona. Umbhalo ophambi kwaso ubaleka kuhle, Thandabantu Store, amabala amakhulu abhalwe ngokumnyama emdulini omhlophe. Umsindo werediyo ekoThandabantu umkhulu kakhulu ukwedlula amazwi abantu abasebhasini abamemeza befuna ukuthi impahla zabo zehliswe ephahleni lwebhasi lapha ebezibotshelwe khona, njalo ezenelise khona ukuhlala zivikelekile uhambo lonke zisuka edolob-heni. Kuyamenezwa, kuthiwa iphephandaba elidala elingaselam-sebenzi kaliphoswe phandle ngewindi, umntwana okhalela unina umi eduze kwamavili ebhasi. Indoda edakiweyo iyavuswa itshelwa ukuthi isifikile eKezi njalo sekumele yehle khonokho nje ebhasini. Iyadiyazela iphume, ikhutha inyathelo lokucina isehla ebhasini ise-qela phansi. Iyakhala, masinya nje sekuthe dlwe, ngoba isikhwama sayo semali sesicatshile. Uthuli lolu lwenza umsindo uhambe kancane kancane njengephupho.

Isitolo sakoThandabantu silevurandi elibanzi lapha abantu abajwayele ukuhlangana khona njalo bahlale baxoxe, belindele ibhasi

ukuthi ifike kumbe imota nje ezidlulayo, ukuthi zime, zethule umbiko, impahla ezithunyelweyo, ikhuba lenkabi, kumbe umuntu nje. Bayamelela, bengameleli lutho ngaphandle kokuzwa ukuhlabelela kwamazwi abo. Uqansa amanyathelo amathathu atshiyana ngefidi elilodwa njalo ebanzi okwamamitha amabili ufike esitubhini sesamende esimi saba lamakhona amane, usufike emnyango omkhulu ongena evurandini eliphose lavaleka livalwa ngumduli wezitina omfitshane. Ngaphambili kulamaphila amabili amade okwaneleyo ayiwo athwele uphahla olufulelwe ngamazenge, apendwe ababomvu. Uphahla lolu lumboze yonke iphambili yesitolo. Lolu phahla lungaphansi kophahla lwesitolo sonke lona olufulelwe ngama-asibhesita lutshiya umkhandlo phakathi lapha okubhalwe khona. Umduli wevurandi mude ukuyaphezulu okuyimitha eyodwa njalo ubanzi okuyingxenye yemitha. Imiduli yevurandi lapha ephelela khona kwendleleke kuhle okokuthi kudala indawo enhle ukuthi abantu bahlale phezulu. Iphansi, elalike lapendwa labamnyama, khathesi selilemikenke, kwezinye indawo sekwxexebuka isamende yasuka kwasala ukhethe olumahlahladla selusegcekeni, imikenke yalo ilephungana ngenxa yokuchithekelwa yinamnede lepharafini, kodwa ilokhu iyindawo engasetshenziswa. Kulezitulo ezibazwe ngezandla kanye lamabhokisi okuthwala imbodlela zekhokhokhola angasetshenziswayo asengawokuhlala, kulebhentshi lensimbi kanye lomduli lo oxhumanisa amaphila amabili la; iphezulu lomduli lo lendlelekile njalo lilo-longekile. Ivurandi liyindawo eyingxenye evikelekileyo, indawo evalekileyo, indawo yokuphumula.

Amadoda ahlala phezu komduli inyawo zawo zilengela phansi, yingaphambili yezicathulo kuphela ethinta iphansi. Axoxa okungapheleliyo, esazi okunye, ekhohlwa okunye. Ahlala ngokuzithemba okukhulu ezitulweni, imihlane yawo yehlile iseduze lomhlabathi, kumbe ahlale eyame umduli wesitolo, eduze komnyango, inyawo zawo zigxile phansi zaqina, inhliziyo zawo zitshaya. Umhlambi wezinkomo udlula khonapho amaklilogo azo ekhala ngaphansi kwentamo zazo, zisima zikhangela ummango, zisuka lapho zihambe zisehla zihamba phezulu

kwebholoho zichapha uMfula uKwakhe. Okwamamitha ambalwa usuka esitolo sakoThandabantu kugcwele amasondo enkomo, umnuko wobulongwe, lelanga eselibomvu gebhu.

Isitolo silikamelo elilodwa elikhulu, elilemiduli ephezulu, lamashelufu amanengi ngemuva kwekhawunta, amashelufu lapha okwelekaniswe khona inqwabanqwaba zemigodla yetshukela emhlophe ebhalwe ukuthi Gold Star, amagabha abomvu awejemu lezithelo lochago lwamagabha. Uthuli selwenze inqunjana phezu kwezimbodlela zepulastiki ezamafutha eRoil lawe-Olivine kanye laweSunflower, akekho ozikhathaza ngokubona ukuthi zihlala zihlanzekile, ngitsho lomgcinisitolo, uMahlathini, kazikhathazi. Kulemigodla yendumba. Lamagwaliba abhaliweyo akuyo yonke indawo emdulini, amayelana lempilo lekhokhokhola, amaphilisi oqhuqho, kanye lochago lweNespray.

Phambi kwesitolo, eduze lenkalakatha yesihlahla somganu esimi side ukwedlula uphahla lwesitolo sakoThandabantu njalo siside ukwedlula ingqe yisiphi esinye isihlahla esiseduze kumbe esikhatshana, umhlambi wabantu osuphelelwe yisineke sokulinda usuka ngesiqubu usiya ebhasini usiyahlangabeza izihlobo labangane asebephendukile bevela edolobheni, bevela koBulawayo. Bathola abanengi, abanye njalo abatholi lutho. Isikhathi sinye ngasinye sidala injabulo yokufumana okutsha obe ungakwazi. Ibhasi, ukuxokozela, konke kungaphansi kwesihlahla - lokho yikho okutshengisa ukuthi isihlahla side kanganani, sithe ngci amahlamvu njalo siside, ingatsha zithanyela phezu kwebhasi, njalo silamaganu aneleyo ahamba lehlamvu linye ngalinye. Abantu bayafuqana okungapheliyo, bakhweze amazwi abo phezulu, baklabalale bememeza bekhangele emawindini angavumi ukuthi ubone okuphakathi, bedinga, sebekhathazekile. Ukhondakitha utshaya impembe yakhe kakhulu eyidonsa okwesikhathi, imizimba iyazunguzeka, ihlehlele khatshana. Umhlambi wabantu utshedela emuva njalo uvumele ukhondakitha adonse isivalo sivulekele ngaphandle. Bafuqekela phambili abasebhasini bangavela baqalise ukuchithekela phandle. Abanye balapha ukuzakwemukela impahla

eziphathiswe ukhondakitha, ngakho kumele balinde aze alungele ukuthi abaqhubele kumbe abize amabizo abo, njalo nxa ebazi, lamabizo abo ewazi kuhle, ubiza amabizo abantwababo endaweni yawabo.

Njalo kulezincwadi ezivela kubomkabo, lezivela kuzithandwa. Lempahla zamasokisi enayiloni leziketi ezilungiswe ngesiliki engathi igxotshiwe, kuze amabharetha abomvu, lezigqizo. Kulezimbodlela zamakha athiwa yiShield lokunye okokugeza okuthiwa yiTomesei Shampoo. Lephonzi. Lamagcobo endebe afakwe umnuko welemoni. Letshingamu efakwe umnuko wesinamoni. Ikhona ikhokho-bhata lamagcobo athiwa yiCamphor afakwe ematshubhini epulastiki. Lokungumgodla okuncinyane okugcwele izikopela ezibunjwe ngendlela ekhangayo, zikhanga kakhulu ngobuncane bazo kanye lobunengi bazo, indoda kumele nje izithumele enineni layo elilindeleyo ukuthi ziyegcinwa, kwenye indawo, zihlale zisesulwa uthuli, zigcinwe lapha ezingangenwa khona ngamanzi lomuhlwa, zingasetshenziswa ngitsho ukuchibela ingqe yisiphi isigqoko kodwa zigciniwe, eKezi. Inina, lingenisa iminwe yalo phakathi komgodla ngezikhathi ezithile lisizwa ubuhle lobutshelezi bezikopela njalo lokuthinta kwazo enzitsheni, ziluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka, ziluhlaza okujiyileyo, ziluhlaza okugcweleyo njalo ziluhlaza okudlula bonke obunye ubuluhlaza, kodwa zikhanyela okokuthi umuntu angabona into engale ekhangele ngazo. Ngempela uzaphenduka ngayo leyana ibhasi yeKezi-Bulawayo-Kezi. Inina lizalinda aze enze njalo kumbe aze athumele okunye njalo okumangalisayo okuzavalela ukuswela kwakhe isineke, okunye owesilisa akuvumbulule efuza ekhoneni lekamelo, kwenye indawo, kumbe okunye akufice kulahliwe phezu kwedeski lendoda emhlophe emqhatshileyo ukuthi imsebenzele, umsebenzi othile; yona engelasikhathi ngale into eqakathekileyo ebekwe lapha okungafanelanga ibekwe khona. Lokhu indoda ensundu ikuthatha ingesabi ukuthi izabonwa, njalo ingesabi ukuthi ingakhalinyelwa ngakho.

Kanti njalo ibhasi iza lokubhidlika kobuhlobo, impahla eziza zingelancwadi phakathi, kumbe incwadi elombiko ongagculisi inhliziyu, kodwa-ke sonke isikhathi, kulempahla okumele zethulwe ephahleni

Iwebhasi; amamathirasi, amatafula, izihlalo, ingubo, imbiza lamasaka enhlanyelo yomumbu sekulungiselelwa ukulima. Ukuletha umbheda usuka edolobheni ngokunye kwezinto ezithathwa njengokuphumelela okuphezulu kakhulu. Impahla zethulwa ngonanzelelo olukhulu, ingalo ziselulwa, izandla zemukele impahla zibekwe phansi. Kulamawindi, awalabo asebeqalise ukwakha izindlu zabo ngezitina. Lemigubazi yensimbi. Sikhona isivalo esilesibambo sensimbi; njengaleso abalaso esikolo sabanali, iKunene Mishini. Loba nje amanzi esakhiwa khonale emfuleni kumbe esikotshweni ngumuzi munye ngamunye, indoda kayizi lomgubazi wensimbi kuphela, ithwala lamakhanda empompi zesiliva awokuvulisa amanzi. Funa kulunge.

Abantu behla ebhasini baqale bangene esitolo sakoThandabantu bathenge ingqe yini abalibele ukubuya layo koBulawayo, kumbe ingqe yini abayinanzelelayo, bayithande, njalo abanganelisa ukuyithwala, kumbe ukuyingenisa empahleni zabo ezinengi. Kungemva kokungena kwabo koThandabantu kuphela lapho abachitheka khona sebeqonda emizini yabo, bezizwa sebelamandla okumelana laloba yini abangelaqiniso layo abayitshiye ngemuva; udaba olungalungiswanga; into ebahluphayo - kungakhathalekile ukuthi bebengekho okwesikhathi eside kangani, kumbe esifitshane kangani. Uthuli oludalwa ngamavili lungakadedi lokudeda bangena esitolo njengabantu ababalekayo. Bangena evurandini lesitolo sakoThandabantu elibemukela ngezandla ezivulekileyo, baxoxe okungapheliyo lomgcinisitolo uMahlathini, bephanga izindaba mayelana lokuthi ngubani osewafayo, owathathayo, olenkomokazi ezeleyo, othuthe esuka eGulati ezelelwakha eKezi. Bafisa ukwazi okunengi okudlula lokhu, okunengi ukudlula lokho okungabekwa ngamazwi. Iqiniso alibambeki; bemukela lokho okusobala; inhliziyo zabo, zitshaya.

Balambale ukuvikeleka kwenye into abayitshiye ngemuva. Ukuba ngofakazi akade bengekho, badinga ulwazi olwaloba yini eyenzakale kungela kuphathisa kwabo, eKezi. Sebefile ngumhawu, bacela ukuthi bephulwe kulo umhawu luhele lwezimbodlela ezitshisayo njalo ezigcwele uthuli ezefanta, esezahlala emashelufini okwamaviki, zin-

gakaze zithintwe. Kabathathi intshintshi emalini abayikhuphileyo, bayasinama; ngokuziqhenya, basukumise ingowane zabo bezisuku-misela uMahlathini, bebumba amaqhinga awokuthi baqhubeke belokhu beyame ekhawunteni belesizatho, bengenisa isandla bengathi bayantshontsha esikhwameni sebhulugwe eli-ayinwe kühle engathi bayasixwayisa, bebambabamba isilevu ngesandla esivulekileyo, be-beke indololwane zombili phezu kwekhawunta elegirisi; bebuza kanye lokuhlola ukuqakatheka kwempendulo yinye ngayinye. Umnyaka usaqalisa nje, lengxubevange yawo eyomoya ovunguza ngamandla, ilanga elivutha bhe, kanye lempi.

Sebehle bekhanuka izibane zedolobheni zona abazibona zilokukhanya okungcono ukwedlula okwenyanga, sebekhanuka ukufungelana lokuphathana kühle, ukuqhuba kwalo okufana lokomthala, khona okwenziwe ngumuntu. Uyenelisa ukubala isikhathi edolobheni ngeminuko yalo ethile kanye lemisindo yalo, ekuseni kakhulu uqhathshi lwesinkwa esiphekwa embizeni zokubhaka koLobels, utshwala obuchithekele emikotweni yezindlu sebubila, imihlambi yabomangoye abacakileyo abawisa amagabha ezibi bephanda kuwo bedinga ukudla, ukuxokozela kwabathengisi bamaluba bengaphandle kwewolu yedolobho ngezikhathi zemini enkulu. Sekunjalo, ukunuka kwephephulo lethara etshayo okusuka kumhlambi wezimota kungena kuyo yonke ingxoxo, njalo sekuphakathi, phakathi kobusuku, abantu abamnyama sebesukile phakathi laphakathi kwedolobho ngaphandle kwabalutshwane abadingekayo, kulapho-ke okubonakala amadoda amhlophe eseWoteleni uSolobhoni eminza utshwala obucengeke okwamagama enathela emangilazini angangezithupha, ubuso bawo buzenzisa, amahlombe ewele phakathi ngenjabulo engezwisisekiyo njalo eyangasese.

Sebefake emakhwapheni amaphakethe amabhisikiti akoLobels athiwa Choice Assorted, kumbe aweLemon Creams, kumbe athiwa yiMitchell's Ginger Biscuits, abehle ebhasini baminyezelana bangene koThandabantu bathenge imbodlela zeMazowe. Bathenga isinkwa esivele koBulawayo ngalonolo suku, ngayonaleyo ibhasi yeKezi-Bul-

awayo abehle kuyo khathesi nje. Kuhlala kulebhizimusi sonke isikhathi lapha esitolo sako Thandabanu njalo akusimali yodwa eqhutshelwanayo. Kuthi lapha amashelufu ephunguka kulethwe ezinye impahla zisuka ngemakamelweni angemuva ziphakathi kwamakhadibhokisi amakhulu, njalo impahla ezitshiyeneyo eseziphungukile ziyabuyiselwa, ngemizila, indumba eziphekiweyo ezisemagabheni, ijemu, lesepa. Imali yamatshe ibanga umsindo; amazwi abaqatha, njalo ukukhanya kuqala ukufiphala, kubonakala ngewindi.

Indoda lomfazi abafake amangilazi okuvala ilanga afananayo bahlezi bethule ngaphansi kwesihlahla somganu njalo bakhokha umoya. Indoda igqoke iyembe ebomvu, umfazi ugqoke isiketi esibomvu. Sebephen dukile ekhaya, sebeqogelele lokho abangakwenelisa ngedolobho, okumayelana labo. Sebezilungisele khathesi ukuvuka benukelwa yintuthu yomlilo, besizwa umsindo wenyekevu lomculo othuleyo wamajuba. Babuka ibhasi elamathemba abo afinqwe kuwo wonke amawindi ayo. Lezigqoko zabo zihlanganisiwe esuthukhesini ebots shelwe phezu kophahla lwebhasi ngerekeni emnyama. Igcwele uthuli, ayilamuhlwa, ilamatshatha e-ayizikrimu. Zigoqwe kuhle phakathi kwesuthukhesi, lamalembu amhlophe awokugoqela imqamelo athungwe abalazwa, ababewasebenzisa bobabili bephakathi kothando lwabo lwedolobheni njalo abawathenga koVidaya ngasuku lunye sebeswele imali eyeneleyo eyokuthenga ithireyi yepulastiki elobubanzi lobude obungama-intshizi alitshumi lambili ababeyifuna kakhulu. Yayileluba okuthiwa yirozi elilodwa elilithanga, lingelameva.

Abantu bayasondela eduze kwekhawunta njalo bavale yonke indawo, njengenjayelo, bale ukutsheda. Amazwi abo alamadlabuzane ahlaba yonke into ekhona ngaphandle kokuphathelane labo. Bayanyenyeza mayelana lamaqaqa eGulati. Benanzelela ukuthi kabezwiwa muntu, ukuthi kungabonakali ukuthi ilizwi liphuma kubani, bengatshiyi ngitsho lomzidlana wobuhlungu babo ababufihlileyo ngaphandle kokuzonda okukhwela ngaphansi kwengalo zabo. Bayahleka. Duze lemizimba yabo ngumgido wedolobheni olokhu us-

alele enqagaleni lapha umphetho wamabhulugwe abo ogoqwe khona njalo osuthwele uthuli olucoleke njengefulawa. Akulalutho olubathengisayo okudlula leyongalo engazunguzekiyo okuhlonywe ekhwapheni layo iphakethe lamabhisikitsi athiwa yiChoice Assorted lagogodlelwa laqina, ukuxhawulana okunxele, lalesosandla esisodwa esihlonywe esambeni sebhulugwe, sidinga ukuzilibazisa, hatshi ukukhudumala. Ukuba eKezi, ukuba egangeni, yikuba engozini: ukwesaba kwenza inhliziyo zabo zitshaye njengengungu. Impi iseduze kakhulu, eduze kakhulu ukuthi ungezwa ukunuka kwayo.

ISAHLUKO SESITHATHU

UTHENJIWE UYAHAMBA AQUME UMGWAQO, angene phakathi komhlambi wabantu, impahla, lamazwi adingayo. Uphethe imali aza-thenga ngayo eyifumbathe wayithi nko, imali elutshwane engamat-she, esandleni sakhe sokudla. Uqonde ukuthenga imbodlela yamafutha okupheka, ifulawa, iphakethe lesawudo, iphakethe letiye, lomentshisi. Kabukho ubuso kumbe amazwi awajwayeleyo ngakho uyaqhubeka, aphakamise unyawo ekhwela esitebhisini sakuqala, alandelise olunye futhi, masinyazana nje umzimba wakhe wonke ube usuphakathi kwamazwi alamadlabuzane awela phansi, ngaphansi kwenyawo zakhe. Kumele alindele ithuba lokuthi angene emnyango lapha okuminyene khona, osugcwele ngengowane zamadoda, lezandla eziphakanyiselwe phezulu zabumba amakhona amathathu ngaphezu kwamakhanda, ngasikhathi sinye impama eziqinileyo njalo ezivikelayo zisehla phezu kwemifolo ephezu kwengowane yinye ngayinye, zibandezela ingaphezulu, zidonsela phansi. Zingowane ezimnyama, eziyimpunga lezibomvana. Indawo igcwele. UThenjiwe kajahanga ngitsho njalo angema eceleni, azikholisele umculo, mhlawumbe lomgido.

Kulendoda ehlezi yodwa esitolo sakoThandabantu, umthunzi wophahla lwesitolo uquma ubuso bayo bube zingxenye ezimbili, enye ibe mnyama, enye ikhanye. UThenjiwe wedlula khonapho. Uyayinanzelela, ananzelele lokuthula kwayo. UThenjiwe uyayizwela indoda le eyehlisa inkophe zayo lapho esondela njalo izivuse khonokho nje

isisizwa isithunzi sakhe sithinta amadolo ayo. Ihambisa amadolo ayo iwasa ngapha langale. Ibeka izandla zayo phezu kwamadolo ayo, isendlala iminwe yayo, izunguza amadolo ayo aze aphendule ikhanda lakhe akhangele emuva, enyaweni zayo hatshi emadolweni ayo. Kuyo ngqo. Izenza emangeleyo njalo ikhweze intshiya zayo, ibuze umbuzo, idinga ukwazi ukuthi angabe efuna uncendo oluthile yini, ibuza ngokuzinikela okukhulu.

Uyazihambela athathe ingxenye yengqondo yayo lapho okuvalelwe khona umcabango othile, umkhumbulo ongelamsebenzi mayelana lezincingo okubotshelwe khona izaziso ezithi AKUVUNYELWA ABANGELAMVUMO lezinye ezithi AKULAMSEBENZI. Ngumkhumbulo wokuhlukuluzwa lobuhlungu obungavelela umuntu, owokuzimisela ngokuphuthuma. Ngumkhumbulo ongancediyo, uyazulazula nje engqondweni yayo uyiphazamise kancane, uyenze ingahlaliseki kancane lapho ihlala phansi, ihamba, kumbe lapho iphakamisa ingalo ukuthi iqedise owodwa wemisebenzi emithathu, ingqe yiwuphi umsebenzi ofika engqondweni, owodwa ngasikhathi sinye, njalo umkhumbulo uyayiphazamisa, kancane, njengomoya ovunguzayo, njengephepha leliyana eyake yalibona isesengumntwana elalindenda emanzini oMfula uNyanyani, i-inki icitsha amagama, iphepha lincipha lisiba lincinyane, selikhanyela ngale kwalo, lidabuka; amagama enyamalala.

Igebisela ikhanda layo kuye ukuze izwe ingabe yini angayikhuluma kulokhu ekutshiloyo, inanzelela ukumamatheka okubakhona emehlweni akhe. Amadolo ayo kawasaxegi, abandezekele phansi ebandezelwa ngamehlo akhe adingayo. Wenza amadolo ayo aqine. Iyabobotheka kakhulu ukubobotheka okulakho konke okuphathelelaye kodwa okungelani lezolo layo, imikhumbulo yayo elimukayo, ethuleyo njalo icatshile. Khathesi kukhona okunye okungahlalisekanga phakathi kwayo, okuzulazulayo lapho ehamba esedlula.

Iyakhumbula. Amehlo ayo alandela ukuhamba komcabango lo. Ikhumbula isiswebhu esiphakanyiselwe phezulu sithunga isibhakabhaka. Isiswebhu sitshaya umoya, ngemva kwakhe. Ikhangelala

ngaphezulu kwamahlombe kaThenjiwe, khatshana le emuva. Inqola isendleleni, ilengiswe phakathi kwakhe lempilo yaphakade. Okucina khona isibhakabhaka kungayihlenga, isibhakabhaka lomhlaba yikho kodwa okungalwisana lokuba khona kwakhe. Isibhakabhaka esitshileyo esantambama sesifuna kuse. Lapho okucina khona isibhakabhaka. Inqola iyagenquka. Iyamiswa. Lapha okube kulebhasi khona. Uthuli luyasukuma lwenze amayezi amancane. Iyamkhumbula owesifazana lo engathi yake yahlangana laye ngaphambili, kudala le. Kungaba nguye kuphela. Kodwa wambona ngaphi? Ilizwi layo liyavuleka eceleni kwakhe, limise ukuhamba kwakhe, isipha okunye okungokwakhe. Okunye okusuka kuyo. Imphathele isipho esingelabizo. Itshaya umlozwi wentokozo. Iyintokozo ngokwayo.

Khathesi isibuyisela emuva amadolo ayo, izithupha zayo izihlome emakhwapheni ayo. Iyema mpo njalo itshaya iphansi ngonyawo lwayo, unyawo lwayo luphakanyisiwe, lutshaya phansi. Itshaya ngokubekezela phezu kwephansi lesamende. Inhliziyo yayo iyatshaya, idonsa unyawo lwayo ilusondeza eduze kwegabha ehlezi phezu kwalo, ilubhodisa ekucineni kwalo, njalo igwegwe umphetho walo ngangemuva yesicathulo sayo, igone umkhumbulo lapha owesifazana ehamba esedlula, iphinde njalo, unyawo lwayo lwesenxele ilusa phambili, inganelisi ukuma mpo, iyenelisa ukuzwa ukuhwaywa kwegabha, um-sindo ozwakala kuhle ongatsho lutho osuka enyaweni lwayo lutshayeleva ingaphansi yesicathulo ensimbini etshisayo. Ima inganyikinyeki. Ilanga selisiyatshona.

Owesifazana uyaqhubeka enjalo, esenza ngonanzelelo olukhulu ukuthi angaphenduli ikhanda lakhe, hatshi ngalesi isikhathi kodwa masinyane nje, esenqobe izifiso zakhe zokukhangela ngaphezu kwehlombe, ame phambi kwayo indoda atsho olunye ulutho, ingqe yini, ukupha uhleko olupheleleyo nje, mhlawumbe ukuyiphakamisa lapha ehlezi khona ayenze ilingane laye. Baphose balingane nje. Ukuze abone nje ukuthi ngubani ozathinta omunye kuqala, ozakwelula isandla ebingelela phakathi kokungqikaza okungaka, lokuvumelana okukhulu kangaka phakathi kwabantu abangazaniyo. Umlozwi wayo

udlula ukuzidela - umayelana layo yona ngokwayo, umlozwi, okuthi lapha ungajulisanga ingqondo, uthi kawulani loThenjiwe, ophathelane kakhulu layo ngokwayo, umsindo wokusebenza, owendoda echitha isikhathi isenza okunye okuphathisayo, ibaza isigodo, ibaza kumbe ihamba ibhoda lesitalada esibanzi. Kungelalutho olungumculo kumbe olubuhlungu kodwa kungatsho ukuthi kakukhwabithi. Ukhokha umoya ngokuthula yona ilokhu iqhubeka iphatheke ngomsebenzi wayo owezandla zayo ezingelalutho.

Uyakhohlwa ngakho lokho njalo uThenjiwe, ame eceleni. Engaphazanyiswa kodwa ephazamisa. Engasafisi ukuphunyuka. Kaselakho okumvikeleyo ize iyekele ukutshaya umlozwi wokuhlekisa njalo yeyame kuye, yeyamise bonke ubunzima bomzimba wayo phezu kwakhe, kumbe kubonakala angathi kunjalo.

Uyahleka yedwa njalo akhahlele izithende zakhe eziligugu. Inyawo zakhe zidonsela eduze isandali elilephansi yalo elithanga lamabhanti abomvu awuke uzwane lwakhe, isandali khathesi selisehla lisikha ishebetshebe phansi lithela imibala yakhe eligugu.

Ngeqiniso kazikhathazi ngokunengi kodwa unaka ukuhamba kwakhe, ukuphefumula kwakhe, ubulula besibindi sakhe esokuthi athandwe. UThenjiwe udedela isifiso esinkanyazela emalungeni akhe amahle lapha esizwa umlozwi udabula umoya usiza uqonde lapha akhona. Uyawuzwa awubambe. Ubona usiba olulodwa olulamabala lusehla lusuka esihlahleni somganu luwela endleleni yakhe. Uzizwa esenqunu njalo uyamangala ukuthi kambe layo ingabe ilubonile lolo siba olunkanyazelayo. Ufuna ukuludobha kodwa kakwenzi lokho. Lokho kungaba yingozi. Kazithembi ukuthi angagobisa amadolo akhe ayekhonale phansi khatshana, elule ingalo yakhe, aphinde njalo enelise ukuphakama esiyathola umoya. Angafa nya, ngempela, yona ibukele, isenelisa ukuphephetha umlotha wakhe iwususa emhlabathini ivuthele kanye kuphela.

Intsha sibili emicabangweni yakhe, indoda le. Imenza acabange kutsha isenzo sinye ngasinye kungathi ilamandla okubumba umbono ngaye. Njalo kungani kumhlupha? Uvele eziphilela impilo yakhe

sonke isikhathi nje, elandela indlela efanayo nsuku zonke. Indoda le yehlukile.

Ubusika, uNhlangula loNtulikazi, yisiphephelo sakhe, isikhathi sakhe esiqakathekileyo asivikelayo kakhulu. UMFumfu. Besekufika-ke isikhathi sezulu, ukusukela ngoLwezi kusiyafika uZibandlela. Isikhathi sezulu lodaka lezibungu ezibanjwa ezidulini ezincibilikayo, zizinengi zilensiba eziyisiliva, insiba ezikhanyisa ngale kwazo, amat-she atshelelayo lamayezi ancibilikayo, izibungu ezigebha zihlale enhlabathini lezinye ezimnyama ezilamabhatshi ayimpunga, ezilamehlo abomvu, ezimise impondo, ezizenza angathi zifile. Ithonsi linye ngalinye lezulu elitshaya phansi liba yindawo yokuhlangana.

Sekuyilesiyana isikhathi semvimbi eseziduli ezincibilikayo; izulu litshaya inhlabathi ize ihidlike ezidulini. UThenjiwe, emuhle ukwedlula izulu, ubukela izulu linciphisa amaqaa, kusala sekwendlalekile, litshiya kulamagodi akhamisileyo lapho okwakulesiduli eside ukwedlula amahlombe akhe, njalo eside ukwedlula ubude ngokwabo, esasikade simi khona; izulu lidabula umoya. Amadundulu amadala, amagade enhlabathi eqinileyo eyehlule ukuncibilikiswa ngamanzi asezimbobombobo, anamathele eceleni kwezihlahla ezivikeleyo, asala esenjengezibotshwa, izihlahla ziphezulu, amaxolo ehlephuka, amanzi elokhu egcwala engananze lutho egombolozela inhlabathi eqinileyo ecolekileyo enamatheleyo, imnyamanyana, ephahleni lomlomo, injengomhluzi wetshukela lapha uyimunya. Amavimbandlebe - umhlambi wezibungu ezincinyane, ezilempiko, ezingaboniyo, ezizitshayelesa emathonsini ezulu, ziwela edakeni olumhlophe phansi enhlabathini zingasela mpiko, umhlambi wezibungu osukuma uyephezulu njengendumiso, usulungele ukufa ukuze ulahlekelwe zimpiko zawo, zigqitshelwe lizulu. Yinkululeko enkulu kulazo zonke - ukulahla impiko lokwenelisa ukubaleka. Ziyehla, zibomvana, zisabalala phansi. Inyoni zehla zihwitha ziphakame sezithwele, esinye lesinye isibungu sigoqana singaphumuli, singelampiko. Amavimbandlebe - umhlambi ovala indlebe zingezwa - uhambo lwawo luthule zwi, ubunengi bawo, lokuphonguthi veliyani kwawo kuyamangalisa,

kumangalisa okokuthi kuletha ubuphofu hatshi emehlweni kodwa endlebeni. Zivala ukuzwa, hatshi ukubona, ngoba ukubona kunjengephupho. Kazenelisi ukwala uhambo lokundenda lokuzibulala, ukwehlela emnyameni. Ngakho-ke esinye isehlakalo sincea esinye, sihluphekela esinye, ukungezwa endlebeni kusenzela ukubona. Ukhumbula ngesikhathi sezulu, ekhumbula ngoLwezi, lapho indoda imlandela, isuka esitolo sakoThandabantu isedlula isihlahla somganu, ngokuphangisa nje.

Imi okwesikhatshana lapho obekumi khona ibhasi yakoShoeshine, iyakwazi ukuthi ukuhamba kwakhe ezitshila kutsho ukuthi umhlaba wonke lowo ngowakhe. Iyingxenywe yalowo mhlaba ngakho iyamlandela njengesithunzi, imbona engena indledlana encinyane eqonda kibo, imbona esehluleka ukuphakamisa amehlo akhe ukuthi ahlangani lomkhathi lo okhazimulayo uphihlika indawo yonke ebagombolozelayo.

UThenjiwe uyahamba engathikazi, lendebe ezigcweleyo njalo eziloxolo, yena, ephela amandla, ukusuka kolunye usuku kusiya kolulandelayo, yena, ethola amandla, ephoseka esuka kolunye usuku esiya kolulandelayo, uyasukuma, uyazitshila, ingqondo yakhe ikhululekile. Ugonjolozelwe ngamavimbandlebe, umhlambi wezibungu leziyana unyakazela ngaphansi kwenyawo zakhe, zitshona phansi emhlabathini ukuyacatsha khona ukuze zithole njalo amandla azo okundenda lezifiso zazo zokuhamba ziye kude. Ukuze ziphaphe phakathi kwezulu njalo, kumele zigqitshelwe kuqala. Isikhathi sezulu, ukusukela kuLwezi kusiya fika kuZibandlela. UMfumu. Kuyatshisa njalo kugcwele intuli, esidakwe yibunzima besikhathi esesifuna ukuphela. Kanyikinyeki, njengokuzimisela kwale indoda.

Uletha umuntu lo ongaziwayo ekhaya. Kulezinto ezinengi okumele azilibale, ngakho-ke lokhu kuqondile. Kazi lutho khathesi, loba nini, ukuthi enye ingozi okumele ayilibale isezakuza kwelakusasa, hatshi eyesikhathi esidlule, njalo lokuthi kasoze athole isikhathi esaneleyo kwelizayo ukuthi alibale ingqe yibuphi obunye balobo buhlungu.

Isikhathi siyadingeka ekukhumbuleni njengoba sidingeka ekulibaleni. Ingathi labo ubuhlungwana obunganganani bufuna isikhathi esinengi ukwedlula ukukhokha umoya, ukukhokha umoya okukhulu kufuna isikhathi esingunaphakade, ubuhlungu obukhulu bufuna impilo yonke. Impilo yonke yinde ukwedlula isikhathi esingunaphakade: isikhathi esingunaphakade singabakhona kungelabantu abakhona.

Indoda iseduze kwamadolo akhe. Yikho lokho kuphela akufunayo, indoda imthinta amadolo akhe njalo imtshela imizamo yayo, kungakhathalekile ukuthi iyini, izifiso zayo nje, langabe zincane njani. Ngakho-ke nansi ilapha, indoda le. Njalo uma indoda imlandele isuka khonale esitolo sakoThandabantu njengomntwana ohluphekileyo kumele enzeni yena. Ubhalu lwenyosi lwenzani ngomhlambi wenyosi ngaphandle kokuziyekela zingene luzigcine njalo lube selusipha enye lenye umsebenzi oqondene layo, enye lenye indawo yokuhlala. Iyazithanda izithende zakhe, itsho njalo. Uyayivumela ukuthi imlandele ekhaya.

Iyazithanda inzipho zakhe. Ithanda linye ngalinye lamathambo akhe, kusukela ekhalweni kusiyafika enqagaleni, legazi eligeleza ngaphansi kwesikhumba sakhe. Kambe uyakwazi na ukuthi inyembezi ziyageleza ngaphansi kwamehlo akhe loba nje engakhali, zigeleza phakathi kwakhe; engakangeni eqinisweni lakhe yena ngokwakhe. Ithanda amathambo akhe, ukuhambelana kweminwe yakhe. Ithanda kakhulu ithambo eliphambuka lisuka esinqeni sakhe. Ithanda ukwehla ngokuthula kokunye lokunye kokuhamba, imisipha iqhela. Lobude besikhathi lapha esusa unyawo lulandela olunye, kancane, njalo ezidela. Ithambo elimhlophe eliyingaphakathi yakhe, izinqe zakhe zihamba. Ibeka isandla sayo ekhalweni lwakhe njalo ibike, sengathi uyisidalwa esitsha, 'Leli lithambo elihle.'

Kambe uyakwazi na ukuthi ithambo yisitho esome kakhulu emuntwini, njengazo zonke izinto ezibumba isimo, ezisekela izinto ezimanzi ezinjengenyama lamanzi legazi. Ithambo: okuyisona isitho sodwa emzimbeni wethu esicezukayo, esivadlakayo, esingalimaza

wonke umzimba wethu, esephukayo silokhu siphila. Lokhu iyakuthanda, leli thambo elikuye, njengoba iyinto ephakathi khonale eyingxenywe yakhe, eyiyona into eqine kakhulu ekubeni nguye, eyedlula ukufa, eseyoma kudala ungakafi.

Ithatha lonke unyawo lwakhe olubanzi ilugoqele esandleni sayo. Ifithizela kakhulu ethanjeni ifuqela ngaphandle enqagaleni aze ezwe ubuhlungu bukhula njalo buhamba bukwela enqulwini yakhe, lapha ebe ikhona, kuyo yonke indawo lapha ebe ikhona, lapha efisa ukuba khona. Ithatha iminwe yakhe ngezandla zayo zombili njalo iyigoqele ibe yibhola. Amathambo akhe ayagoqeka njengalokho okulindelwe ukuthi abe yikho. Amathambo angaphansi kwamabele akhe, ayisidleke semikhumbulo.

UThenjiwe uyiyekele yamlandela ngalawana umgwaqo osuka esitolo sakoThandabantu, wayikhokhela eseqa ithara leyana etshisayo lomnuko odakayo owamaganu awe kuyo yonke indawo. Yisikhathi samaganu. Iphansi selilithanga elithe kla ngamakhasi awo. Iphansi seliqine saka ngentanga zawo. Iyalandela, njengalokho akwenzileyo, isedlula ubunandi obungatholakala emaganwini uma ibe ingabhodaboda khonapha izizwise umhluzi wawo obuthakathaka.

Ibihlezi esitolo sakoThandabantu imelusile, njalo kuthi lapho esenanzelele njalo angakhangeli eceleni kodwa akhangele khona kanye emuva, ikuzwisise ukuthi useyiphe amathebe akhe, ukuhleka kwakhe, amathangazi akhe alindeleyo. Ekwenzayo ngemva kwalokhu kuyisimanga njalo kuyemukeleka: imlandela ekhaya njengesithunzi.

Kawuzwa umsindo wenyawo zayo ngenxa yegazi eligijigijima yonke indawo emzimbeni wakhe, ithambo litshelela phezu kwelinye, inyawo zakhe zihamba. Khona nje ibeka unyawo lwayo lapha atshiye kubhale khona olwakhe emhlabathini, ifuna ukuthi kube ngokwayo, khonokho nje, yinye ngayinye ingxenywe yakhe, ubunzima bakhe emhlabathini obuthakathaka, lesimo sakhe. Ifuna ukumlondoloza esemzimbeni wayo, idobha ukubakhona kwakhe emhlabathini njengamakha.

Iyawathanda amabele akhe, ukubunjwa kwakhe osekuleminyaka yobudala engamatshumi amathathu lambili, ethe mpo, njengalokho

ayeyikho khona ngesikhathi eleminyaka elitshumi lane kumbe ingqe kunini lapho aqala khona ukwazi ukuthi ungowesifazane, intombi, esehle esazi ukuthi kasindoda.

Uletha ekhaya indoda emupha wonke amathebe akhe, egona unyawo lwakhe, ebutha isithunzi sakhe isibeke khona ngemuva emzimbeni wakhe engathi yingxenye yakhe ebe ilahlekile, njalo uyivumela ukuthi imkhangele emehlweni kuze kuthi bubili babo babone inkanyezi ngenxa yenyembezi esezikuwo. Ekujuleni kwesiziba esimnyama esamehlo akhe indoda ibona izindawo engakaze ifike kuzo, angakaze afike khona. Uyekela ingalo zakhe zisehla njalo ayivumele imgombolozele ngengalo zayo, ngokuphefumula kwayo okuqanda kamnandi, ubuyiyo bayo obuthuleyo, umhlane wakhe uze uzidele njalo abe esegoqa ingalo zakhe esifubeni sakhe njalo ayekele indololwane yakhe yinye ngayinye iyidinge, ngemuva kwakhe lapha emi khona imgombolozele. Ikhulula ubunzima bomzimba wakhe wonke ngaphandle kwendololwane zakhe ezigcinayo njalo izenze ezayo. Ifudumeza lezi ngokutshaya kwenhliziyo yayo, imkhokhela imusa phansi, inhliziyo zabo zitshaya, indololwane zakhe sezikhululekile, ingqondo yakhe isiyindlalifa yombuso waphakade. Uletha isithandwa lesi ekhaya njalo asiphe imisebenzi emilutshwane.

Ibala isigombolozisi sethambo linye ngalinye emhlane wakhe. Uyazi ukuthi imizwa yakhe ilungile kakhulu, iqotho okomhlane. Ufisa ukuzaliswa umntwana yile indoda. Angaba ngumntwana wamaphupho akhe kusukela ekhanda kusiyafika ezwaneni. Angametha ibizo athi nguMazhanje.

AMazhanje libizo lesithelo esitholakala eChimanimani, ezintabeni zempumalanga yelizwe, esilentanga indoda le eze layo inamathele ngaphansi kwesikhwama sayo yasiyihlanyela emlonyeni wakhe njen- gesipho, okwamalanga lamalanga ngemva kokuhlangana kwabo. Sowema ukuzikhathaza ngesikhathi, usekhangela indoda le kuphela.

Ngekucineni kolimi lwakhe uhambisa intanga emlonyeni wakhe, eqonde ukuthi ayikhafulele kwelinye ikhona lekamelo, kwelinye ikhona elingakhanyayo lapha ezahlala kungelamuntu othi ngeyakhe

okwesikhathi, elesifiso sokulungisa kuhle ingqondo yakhe lendawo yakhe yokuhlala, uyayithanyela ngomthanyelo; isiyomile, ayise-labunandi, yikuphela kobufakazi bokuhlangana kanye zwi lendoda eyodwa. Kodwa-ke, ngokuyithinta kanye ngolimi lwakhe ulahlekelwa yingqondo yakhe yonke. Ngemuva kokuqeda konke ukoma kwayo, usephefuzela. Usephelelwa ngumoya.

AMazhanje. UThenjiwe ufuqela intanga ephahleni lomlomo wakhe njalo afuqele indoda eceleni, ayisuse embhedeni. Utshaywe yikukhanya okukhulu kakhulu, okupheleleyo, kumele aphefumule edonsa umoya njalo acabange ngakho njalonjalo. Ufuna ukucambalala phansi, ethule. Ufuna ukuphumula okuphole njengesihotsha. Intanga emlonyeni wakhe, yehla ngesiphangiphangi njalo imnandi. Ufuna ukujula ebunandini bayo. Udonsa umoya kakhulu. Uyedwa.

Ukhohlwa ibizo layo indoda le.

Kafuni ngitsho ukuke akhunjuzwe ngebizo futhi ize idinwe ngaye njalo ivuke ngenye ikuseni igade ibhasi leyana eyeKezi-Bulawayo. Kezi ingazange ikhangele emuva ezandleni zakhe ezivalelisayo eziyicela ukuthi ihlale. Isidiniwe ngowesifazana ongaselandaba lebizu layo eligcweleyo, kodwa omupha izeluleko ngomzimba wakhe, ephendula bonke ubunzima bomzimba wakhe ekhangela eceleni lakhe lombheda ukwenzela ukuthi bathintane, ehambisa isandla sakhe phezu kwesayo bebingelelana, ephendula iminwe yakhe njalo eyiletha elimini lwakhe oluthuleyo; ulimi lwakhe lwesula ubumanzi ngaphansi kwentamo yayo, uphakamisa idolu lakhe lisiyaphezulu lifika enkabeni yayo ukwenzela ukuthi athole ukuphathwa mnandi yiyo, uyikhangela ngomusa ukuze adonsele umzimba wayo eduze, ukugonana kunye ngakunye kusenziwa kuthulwe, esehlukanisa imilenze yakhe, eyipha ubuthakathaka lokufudumala okumangalisayo kwamathangazi akhe.

Kasayibizi ngebizo layo futhi, iqiniso leli iyalinanzelela, lithophele, njalo kuthi kunjalo ibalekele ukuthula kwakhe okukhulu kangaka. Iyasuka engakatsho ukuthi isingasuka, izulu lingakemi ukutshaya lapha akhona. Iyasuka imtshiya ephakathi kwezulu lonke lelo njalo kungaselandoda ezambamba ngesikhathi umbane ubaneka esibhakabhaka.

eni, njalo iziduli zincibilika.

Kumele isuke lobanje ikhangwa nguye njalo ingakaqedisisi lokho angakho, kayikaqedisisi ngitsho lokuthula kwakhe. Iyakhumbula ukuthi kwabanjani ngaleliya langa eliqalekisiweyo ize imlandele esuka esitolo sako Thandabantu esiya ekhaya lakhe, kazange ake akhangele ngaphezu kwehlombe lakhe kodwa yayisazi ukuthi uyakwazi ukuthi yayihamba ngemuva kwakhe sonke isikhathi. Yayisazi, ngendlela ayethwele ngayo ikhanda lakhe. Langendlela azunguzeka ngayo esima lapho okuphelela khona indlela, njalo wahleka kakhulu. Ehambela phezulu ikhanda lakhe lisemoyeni. Ekhuluma layo engaphendulanga ikhanda lakhe. Wayesazi ngayo lenswelo zayo. Kumele ukuthi wayinanzelela ngendlela eyayimnanzelele ngayo, into nje yikuthi yayisuke yabeka ikusasa yayo kweyakhe, ngesikhatshana nje kungelakuthandabuza, kodwa yena wayengakwenzanga. Yamangala, indlela eyayimbona ngayo engqondweni yayo, ehamba eyedlula ngasikhathi sinye yona ithwele umchilo wamakhosikazi phezulu esibhakabhakeni yena wadlula ngaphansi kwawo. Ukuthi yayifisa kangakanani ukuthi imuphe ulutho oluligugu, ingamuphi olunye ulutho ngaphandle kwe-sibhakabhaka esimabalabala. Kusobala ukuthi wayefuna ukuthi imlandele indlela yonke ngendledlana yenyawo evuthiweyo elotshani obuhamba buthintitha izithende zabo bubili babo; kwakusithi ingqe kungaphi lapho ebeka khona izithende zayo, ezakhe zasezikade zibe khonapho.

Yayithi lapho icabanga ngokubakhona kwakhe iphezu kwegabha leliyana ikwazi ukuthi, uma ngabe ehlala endaweni ebizwa ngokuthi Kezi, njalo uma le kwakuyindawo ethiwa Kezi, njalo uma indawo le ilonyawo lwakhe olunyathele kuyo, lapha athinte khona, lokho kutsho ukuthi iKezi yayiyindawo eyayingayithanda njalo iyijwayele. Ngakho yamlandela indlela yonke yaya ekhaya loba nje yayisanda kwehla ebhasini njalo yayilindele ukuthi ingene kuyo njalo ibuyele edolobheni, phela iKezi yindawo eyayitshelwe ngayo, lapho ibhasi eyayingakuthwala ikuse khona, njalo uma wakhe ubungane lokhon-dakitha webhasi, ungabuyela uhlawule ingxenye yemali yohambo

njalo ufake esambeni sakho senxele iphakethe lemhlanga yegwayi elilemhlanga engamatshumi amabili elohlobo lweKingsgate, ugcine umhlanga owodwa kundebe yangaphansi, ungalumathiswanga, ummango wonke ubuyela edolobheni, njalo uma ukhethile, ulilumathise, ube uthintitha umlotha ngewindi ngemva kokuba abantwana besikolo labathengisa amaqanda sebedlule. Yayifuna ukubona iKezi, ukubona okwedlula iBulawayo, ngemva kokuhamba kwayo ummango wonke lo isuka eChimanimani yayifuna ukubona izixuku zamaphane, uMtshwankela, iDololenkonyane, amatshe alengayo ezintabeni ze-Matopo, inkalakatha yeziduli zeKezi. UThenjiwe wayeyenze yahlala, yayileqiniso lalokho, loba nje wayengatshongo lutho oluzwakalayo sibili, engatshongo lutho ngamazwi, kodwa ngendlela ayeyisebenzisile ukuyenza imkhangele, engazange ehlukhanise izindebe zakhe, wayeyenze yamkhangela. Wayemuhle. Liqiniso lelo. Kwakungasikubunjwa kobuso bakhe, kungasikumangalisa kwentamo yakhe, ukuma kwezindebe zakhe, amakhala, ubude lamandla emilenze yakhe, kumbe ijwabu lakhe elibomvana okwenhlabathi, kungayisilokho; kungaphezulu kwalokho. Yayekela ibhasi yabuyela koBulawayo ingelayo loba nje yayisidale ubungane lokhondakitha njalo isiletikiti layo eliy-ingxenye yemali yohambo esikhwameni sayo senxele eseyembe yayo elemizilazila equmanayo.

Akukapheli lanyanga mbili kodwa khathesi konke asefuna ukukwazi libizo laleso sithelo esibanjwe phakathi kwamazinyo akhe kuphela. Khonokho nje kuphela, hatshi okunye. Hatshi olunye ulutho ngayo. Kuphela ubunandi osebaphelayo obalesiya sithelo. Usefikelwe yibunandi bokulangazelela njengomuntu owomileyo abuvuse esikhumbeni saso esiqinileyo. Ulimi lwakhe luyasidinga njengento eduduzayo. Njalo khathesi usesiya emacansini layo, elovalo njalo lomhawu, engathi iyisithandwa esingathembekanga. Uyasukuma eku-gonweni kwakhe aye habula amanzi asenkomitshini yegabha eseceleni kombheda njalo abe eseyibuza ukuthi umzhanje ukhula emhlabathini onjani, kuthatha isikhathi eside kangakanani ukuthi isihlahla esitsha sizale izithelo, ingatsha zaso zibankulu kanganani, amahlamvu abanzi

okungakanani. Uyavuka ukuthi abuze ukuthi yisihlahla esinjani intanga esuka kuso, ukuma kwamahlamvu aso, ubuqatha baso, ukuma kwengatsha zaso, umbala wamaluba aso, lobukhulu bemithambo yaso. Sivele siyaqhakaza amaluba na? Yiziphi inyamazana ezidla izithelo zaso, amahlamvu aso, njalo ingatsha zaso zingabuthwala ubunzima bomntwana na, kumbe okwedlula lokho. Okwedlula umntwana? Singakhula na eliweni, eliweni elilengayo? Eduze komfula? Phakathi komfula?

Ekuqaleni, iphendula umbuzo munye ngamunye ngesineke, isazi ukuthi izathola umvuzo ngokucwayiza kokubonga okusuka emehlweni akhe lapha isihlahla somzhanje singeniswa endabeni. Ekucineni iphelelwa yisineke ngokuthakazelela lokhu lesifiso lesi esimthatha simusa khatshana layo, khatshana lokuthintana kwabo lokumbambathana, khatshana lezikhathi zabo zokuthula kwabo. Okumthatha kumuse khatshana. Akulakuthandabuza. Kusemehlweni akhe angasakhangeli kuyo. Asekude le. Usekhangela esikhwameni sayo edinga izicucu zamahlamvu, ezetshehetshebe, lezekhasi eliwe lisuka kulesi sithelo. Uyaphila, kathesi esengaphansi kwamaxolo aso. Kasafuni olunye ulutho ngaphandle kwesihlahla somzhanje. Yayisikhile lesi sithelo yona ngokwayo, ngeminwe yayo ayeyibambile yena ngeyakhe? Yayikwenzile? Iyehluleka ukukhumbula lokho langabe yini okunye, ngakho uyasusa iminwe yayo ayise khatshana, kuhlekuhle.

Ngelinye ilanga udweba umfanekiso waso phansi emhlabathini abuze ngokuma kwempande zaso. Ufuna ukwazi ukuma kwempande zalesi sihlahla. Ithi kayazi lutho ngalokho. Kayilasikhathi sokukhangelana lempande zezihlahla: okuzimponjwana nje. Imfuqela khatshana, kanye lelizwi lakhe elibuza ngempande. Ubuza umniningwana munye ngamunye engathi ucela ukuzwelwa isihawu.

Endaweni yokuthi abambelele kuyo njalo avumele uthando lwabo lube yilokho olungaba yikho khona, uyehla embhedeni njalo ame khatshana kwayo, ingalo zakhe ezinkulu zibambe ukhalo lwakhe, engavumeli ingqe yini ibe yilokho engaba yikho khona, ngitsho lokuthi

bathintane. Uyayibuza futhi, mayelana lempande. UThenjiwe uyakwazi ukuthi impande zezihlahla zilesimo esibonakalayo okwedlula amahlamvu.

Uyayigubha, uzama ukuyenza ikhumbule. Uyenza ithembise ukugebha esinye salezi zihlahla isibuyele kibo imthumele incwadi, ngebhasi, ngomgwaqo weKezi-Bulawayo-Kezi. Uma ibhalwe ikheli elithi: Thandabantu Grocery Store, izafika kuye masinyane. Umnini sitolo, uMahlathini, uzathuma umntwana lencwadi leyo khonokho nje ukhondakitha webhasi yakoShoe-Shine angavela amqhubele. Ngempela kusobala ukuthi usesithi kayihambe.

Uthatha isiqqa sephepha esitshe nganxanye asicitshe umlilo. Abe esesendlala phansi ngonanzelelo eduze kwesibane. Ubandezela iphepha phansi ngendololwane yakhe. Esebenzisa ilahle, wenza amaphetheni empande zonke azaziyo. Ezinye impande ziqatha, zibutshelezi, amagugu alahlekayo phakathi kwendoda lomfazi. Lezi ziqansa ziqonda esigodweni sesihlahla njengengaphakathi yezandla zikhangeliswe phezulu, njengemithambo emhlabathini, imithanjana. Ezinye impande ziyasabalala zisiyakhathshana lakhathshana, njalo kusobala ukuthi loba zisuka endaweni nye, kazisoze zithintane njalo. Lezi yizo impande eziqine ukudlula zonke. Ufuqela iphepha elilemidwebo yakhe ngaphansi komzimba wakhe abe esesukuma ukuyayihlangabeza, ngesikhathi imbamba, njalo imthanda. Uhlengezela inyembezi emehlweni. Imdonsela khatshana komlilo imusa ecansini njalo imbambe iqinise ngaphansi komzimba wayo umlilo uzucitshe njalo ukukhanya okusuka emlilweni sokunyamalele njalo babodwa ekamelweni. Ekamelweni kumnyama. Ekamelweni kuthule lesimo semizimba yabo laso sesinyamalele. Njengomlilo. Ilizwi lakhe, linqunu emnyameni, lingenelisi ukutsho lapho okulesimo khona kumbe okulesihlahla kumbe indoda, lalo selinyamalele. Umlilo osemizimbeni yabo usuhlangene lomnyama njalo lokuthula, ngokulinganayo.

Ingakamtshiyi, igezisa umzimba wakhe ngochago. Iza lochago lusephondweni iluthele phezu komzimba wakhe wonke. Isuka lapho ikhucule uchago ngezandla zayo zombili kusenziwa lokho ingalo

zakhe zibanjwe zayaphezulu zisedlula amahlombe akhe; uchago luthonta lumhlophe ejwabini lakhe elimnyama. Kuthi lapha ibukele umzimba wakhe uthanjiswa yileyonto esamanzi, ikhulume:

‘Umuhle njengendalo. Akulanto ekhona enhle ukwendlula wena. Akula ngitsho engingakubamba okungendlula wena. Kakho onjengawe. Lapha ngixexebula ixolo elimanzi esihlahleni njalo litshelele lizimele lodwa le njengesikhumba, ingaphakathi yexolo lesigodo sesihlahla imsulwa kayilatshatha okokuthi ngingayikhotha, akula ngitsho okuluthudlana osokwake kwasondela eduze kwayo, kayizake ithintwe lilanga, kayizake ibe segcekeni; kakho osewake wabeka amehlo akhe kuyo ngaphandle kwami. Ngizwa njalo lapha ngikhangela emehlweni akho. Akulalutho osolwake lwafinyelela lapho ngaphandle kwamehlo akho. Akulalutho.’

Ilizwi layo linye ngalinye kuye liqinisile. Ilipha njengesipho. Yindlela yayo, uchago lolu, eyokumguqula abe yilelo xolo elibuthakathaka.

‘Ngifuna ukuhlamba umzimba wakho ngamathonsi amazolo. Aluba bencingabutha wonke amazolo ngiwathatha kubo bonke utshani endleleni esihambe ngayo sisuka esitolo sakoThandabantu bengin-gakwenza, ngithele lawo manzi emhlane wakho. Kumele sihlangane siye emacansini siphezu kotshani, ngelinye ilanga, ekuseni kakhulu, kungakabi lomuntu osevukile, amatshe eGulati esibuka engaphezulu. Kungaba engathi sengithele amazolo phezu komzimba wakho, ithonsi ngethonsi. Sisuka lapho sizakothamela insaba zakuqala ezelanga lekuseni. Njalo amazolo azakoma emihlane yethu. Sizacambalala sithulise silalele insaba zisiwa zivela esibhakabhakeni. Sizabukela lapho ilanga lisomisa umkhwane munye ngamunye owotshani njalo lunye ngalunye usiba lwesibungu, lukhanya lufifi ngale kwalo. Lapho sisizwa intethe zitshaya insiba zazo umgido wethu emazolweni uzakuba usuphelile.’

Iwola amazwane akhe ngezandla zayo, la amazwane, asevele ezwa amazolo. Uhambisa amazwane akhe ewaqondisa kuyo njalo lokhu kwenza ukuthi iyekele izandla zayo ziphezu kwawo, okwesikhathi eside.

‘Nxa ngingakuthintanga kangisilutho. Angiphelelanga. Angiboni lutho. Angizwa lutho. Ngilihlamvu eliphephuka emoyeni. Akulalutho oluhle njengejwabu lakho.’

Isimtshiya, kodwa kakuzwa elizwini layo. Kezwa ngitsho ukusuka kwayo, ilizwi elikhathazekileyo, loba nje iqhubeka njalo isithi:

‘Uma ungafa njalo ngingenelisa ukuvikela isitho esisodwa esomzimba wakho, ngingavikela leli thambo. Ngingalithwala ngihambe lalo yonke indawo, njalo kungaba engathi uyaphila. Ukufa kuba khona kuphela nxa konke okwethu sekunyamalele, ikakhulu leyo ngxenye eligugu kakhulu. Silapha. Ukuleli thambo njalo lingumkhumbulo wami oligugu kakhulu. Lapha uhamba, ukuhamba kwalo kungitshela olunye ulutho olungaphakathi kwakho ngengqondo yakho. Ngiphakathi kwakho. Uma ungafa ngingekho njalo ngifce usungcwatshiwe, ngizagebha umzimba wakho ngonyezi, ukwenzela ukuthi ngithinte ithambo leli elihle. Ngilithinte ngilithinte ngilithinte, uze uphile. Sekunjalo ngizakuyekela uphumule. Iminwe yami isethanjeni lakho. Ngiyathuthumela ukukucabanga ungekho lapha, ukwenye indawo emhlabeni, njalo lami ngiphila, ngikwenye indawo emhlabeni. Ucabangani? Thenjiwe.’

Ibeka isandla sayo phezu kwekhona lethambo, njalo isiyekele sihlale khonapho. Iyambiza. Kaphenduli. Kazange atsho lutho sonke lesi sikhathi. Iyananzelela ukuthi ulalele lobuya bunandi obulesizungu avele esebutholile, hatshi yona. Kamzwanga. Ungomunye walabo bafazi abangakhuthi ukusa, kuhlala engalweni zabo. Ukuthula kwakhe kuphehla kungene ekamelweni njengothuli olucolekileyo. Iyatshelala isuka ekukhanyeni isiya ethunzini. Kumele yenzenjalo. Iquma ukutshiya umzimba lo owochago lamazolo lentanga zamazhanje. Iwutshiye ususeceleni njengoba uvele usukhanya unjalo, usugcwalisekile, kungela lizwi layo eliphazamisa ukuthula kwawo. Itshiya ilokulangazelela okukhulu kakhulu emathanjeni ayo, okokumthanda.

Uyayithanda, kodwa ufuna ukwesula umbono ophikelelayo ngayo, umuntu ozedlulelayo, ongaziwayo, ohlezi esitolo sakoThandabantu, ezunguzeka, ezunguza amadolo akhe njalo etshaya umlozwi omubi

ongumanqoba, ethalaza ngapha langale, njalo ebambe umhlaba unganyikinyeki. Usefuna imizwa yomunye umhlobo, eyedlula lokho, ufuna ukuba yedwa layo, ayithole njalo ekuthuleni kwabo, njalo ayazi ngokwazi okujulileyo okokuthi yena ngokwakhe kasoze afise ukuthi kuphunyuke. Ufuna ukucatsha kuyo, ukukhohlwa yonke into kugogela lesitolo sakoThandabantu sonke isikhathi lapho evala amehlo akhe njalo azame ukukhumbula amehlo ayo, indebe zayo, lelizwi layo limhuga. Uzaqalisa, mhlawumbe, ngesihlahla somganu. Ufuna ukuthola ulwazi ngokuma kwempande zaso ayitshengise zona kuze kube engathi impande lezi kazikho ngaphansi komhlabathi kodwa ziba yimizila ehlanyelwe ngaphakathi kwezandla zayo, umzila ngamunye uyindlela yamaphupho abo. Uyakwazi ukuthi uma ethole ukuma kwempande lezi, khonokho nje kuphela, izakuba isisazi iqiniso elijulileyo mayelana lelizwe lakhe, mayelana leKezi, mayelana lamanzi agqitshelwe ngaphansi kwenyawo zabo. Kayisoze yakhohlwa ngamaganu, umnuko wempande zomganu njalo lobumanzi bolimi olugcwele intanga zitshelela phezulu langaphansi kwemizwa lapha uwamumuza uqeda bonke ubunandi utshiya omile. Uqhatshi lwalokho alusoze luphele endebeni zayo kumbe lutshabalale emlonyeni wayo.

Ngaphandle kokuthi isize yenelisa ukukholisa lobo bunandi njalo isisazi ukuma kwalezi mpande, ingakwenza njani, ngeqiniso lokuzidela, ivele ingamelela njani ukuthi imthande okupheleleyo njen-gokufisa kwakhe ukuthi athandwe, imazise, ngengqondo yayo yonke ihlangene ingazulazuli isiya le esihlahleni sayo, eliweni lemehlweni ayo, ezintabeni zayo le ezintabeni zeMpumalanga lapho umzhanje lowo okhula khona njalo uyibiza ukuthi iphenduke. Ingathembisa njani ukulinda ingakaboni isixuku sameva sesithele amaluba, ingazi, mayelana lentundla ezidla amahlamvu amancuncuncu zize zisuthe zenelise ukuphakamisa amakhanda azo ngaphezulu kwesibhakabhaka esiluhlaza okudlulisileyo; yona, ingakwazi ukumangalisa kwalokho, yayingenelisa njani ukuba leqiniso ukuthi ilakho ukuhlala okwe-sikhathi eside kangako, ingakaze ibone kumbe igole amacimbi esidla amahlamvu ephane, ingazake ifakaze ukuphapha kwawo

okuntshintshayo, ukuphenduka kwawo okumangalisayo, njalo izwe ubuthakathaka bawo isotha umlilo wakhe; yona, ingakaze ibone amahlamvu ephane ehluma esenza isihlahla sibebomvu, esakheka esiba zimpiko ezingaluhlaza kodwa ezilubende olucicimayo, njalo ibone impande zawo zingena zisendlaleka emhlabathini olitshebet-shebe oweKezi, owome qha, umhlabathi ovumela ukuthi amanzi atshone phansi ngesikhatshana nje olombala onjengowethambo elagqitshelwayo.

UThenjiwe ufuna ukuthi ihlale kuze kube lapho isihlangane lodadewabo uNonceba ole khatshana esikolo ebhodini lapha aqedisa khona umnyaka wakhe wokucina, yena ozakuba lapha ngeviki yakuqala ekaMpalakazi ezehlala, njalo enelise ukuhlangana layo, ukuze yona ibone uNonceba esikha amaluba amahle okwamagama ewathatha emfuleni awendlale kuyo yonke indawo endlini ngendlela ajwayele ukukwenza ngayo sonke isikhathi, sekwenzakele lokho kuphela layo isingenelisa ukuzwa impala iseqa izifula ezigcweleyo, njengakwenzayo yena sonke isikhathi lapho kufika umkhumbulo ngomfowabo onguye yedwa, uNonceba. Ngemva kwalokho, lizulu. Ingqondo yakhe ihamba ibuyele emuva, kungakafiki lesi sikhathi, efisa ukuthi ihambe laye njalo imbukele edlala loNonceba ezifuleni eminyakeni leyo eminengi eseyedlulayo lapho bubili babo besesebancane njalo imizimba yabo iqhaqhazela ngenjabulo lapho bewela phezu komfula besenza ukuthi amanzi ahlabele, uMfula uKwakhe uginya imizimba yabo njengamatshe, amanzi ayabagombolozela, amathonsi aqatha ezulu afuqa inkophe zamehlo abo zivuleke, amanzi ayakhudumala emzimbeni, kodwa umfula uyaholoba, ulomfutho, njalo babambana izandla basukume baphume emanzini baye ekhunjinini, uhleko lwabo luphezulu okokuthi lufika ezintabeni zeGulati. Babukela amangabuzane endiza ngaphansi kwengatsha zezihlahla ephinda ephapha esiyaphezulu, ngamandla, esiya ematsheni eGulati. Kuphela nxa sekubenjalo.

UThenjiwe ufuna ukuthi izwe amazwi abo amabili bendawonye, ukwenzela ukuthi yazi, njengoba laye ngobuthakathaka esazi, ukuthi in-

gakahlali kuzo zonke indawo engqondweni yakhe uNonceba, udade-wabo, wayevele sewabamba isandla sakhe ngokuthula njalo kokuphela. Ugijima phakathi kwamasimu alinyiweyo; umhlabathi omutsha, loqatshi loluju lugcwele emoyeni, njalo kulamayezi, izulu liphezulu, njalo kuloNonceba.

UNonceba. Yena olesineke njengogogomagela, on-gaphonguntshintsha nje okwesivukampunzana, wenza kancane kodwa enanzelela kuyo yonke into, kungathi uhamba phezu kosaba lokukhanya olungaqinanga, yebo, ugogomagela oselangeni, yikho nje yena, uThenjiwe, sonke isikhathi kumele ambambe ngesandla agijime laye aqonde ngqo emasimini, njalo angamyekeli, ngaphandle kokuthi uNonceba esegijima phambi kwakhe, esekhululekile eminweni yakhe, eselemibala yonke yelanga enhliziyweni yakhe. UNonceba, okuthi loba ehlukile, unguye ngokwakhe uThenjiwe. Sekunjaloke, ingakwazi konke ngobunguye bakhe, lomfowabo oseduze kwakhe kakhulu kulesithunzi sakhe yena ngokwakhe, yena ongumoya wakhe ogeleza ungena emzimbeni wakhe. Kwakudingeka ukuthi iqale ihlale, okwesikhathi esidazanyana, sekunjaloke ibe isimtshela futhi mayelana lesifiso sayo sokuvuka, esokufa, esokuzalwa kutsha isengalweni zakhe ezinhle.

Lokhu ayisikho ekuzwa ekutsho. Ikhutha lokho abathi bubili babo yikho okwabo. Iphefumula kancane kancane njalo izehlukanise kuye. Kayiyizwa ingoma yakhe ethuleyo njalo iyasuka, ukwenzela ukuthi ivikele ukudinga kwakhe kweqiniso engathandi ukuthi ilinge ukukuzwisisa kumbe ukukuphazamisa, ngempela ayifuni ukuthi izivikele kumbe iphunyuke kuye kodwa ifisa ukuhlonipha lokho esikuphazamisile. Iyakhumbula kunye ngakunye ukuhamba kwakhe, imphumphutha emnyameni njalo imbona engathi ikamelo laligcwele ukukhanya, isazi ubuhle bakhe, emnyameni kumbe ekukhanyeni. Intamo yakhe yinhle emnyameni, ehamba kancane esiza kuyo, engaphansi kwezandla zayo ezivulekileyo njalo zibambe phezu kwakhe, imphendula ekhangela kuyo, imletha ezindebeni zayo lekuhambeni kwayo. Ubuduze, ukuzwa, ukubona. Ukuthinta, ukutshaya

kwenhliziyo yakhe kungaphansi kwesandla sayo, njalo impilo zabo zombili zikuye. Lokhu iyakubona. Lokhu iyakufisa. Lokhu iyakuqakathekisa lapho bephenduka, munye ngamunye ephakathi kwengalo zomunye. Kahlalisekanga ephakathi kumbe engaphandle kwengalo zakhe. Ekumtshiyeni, izwa umhlabathi uvuleka uyiginya injalo. Ithatha inyathelo lakuqala lokuphenduka ingaphandle kwekamelo njalo ikhumbule lapho ayeke anyathela khona, ikhumbula inyathelo linye ngalinye kuwonalowana umhlabathi munye lapho eyayike yamlandela khona, unyawo lwayo seluvalelwe lapha anyathela khona njalo ivele isimthanda njengalokho eyayingakwenza zonke insuku, kumbe engafuna ukukwenza, kumbe eyayingeke yenelisa ukuzifundisa ukuthi ingakwenzi. Iyamtshiya kodwa ilokhu imthanda kunjalo. Uyiqhubela intanga leyana eyodwa eyeza layo isuka elizweni layo njalo iyacazimula njengelitshe eliligugu ngoba uyihlalise emlonyeni wakhe okwesikhathi eside kangaka, intanga esilindele ukuthi iyehlanyelwa kwenye indawo, hatshi lapha, njengoba engazi lutho ngempande zayo, njalo nxa ingenelisa ukuphila emhlabathini okhamise kakhulu kangaka njengeKezi, okome okudlulisileyo, laselimini lwakhe oselukhalela lokho okwadlulayo.

Uthando oluhle kakhulu ngolwesikhathi esifitshane njalo lula-
mandla.

ISAHLUKO SESINE

AMANINA AFUNA UKUTHATHA USUKU alusingathe ngezandla zawo, kodwa angakwenza njani lokhu? Ukusingatha umhlaba lomhlabathi, umkhathi, njalo lokunqoba? Ukukhohlwa isikhathi sokuthikaza, ukufa, iminyaka yokungezwa endlebeni leyokulwisa? Amanina afuna ukuthatha isikhathi sokuzidela nje, esokwesaba okutshayisa ngovalo, njalo amemezele lokhu esukwini osolunyamalele, kodwa angakwenza njani? Njalo athathe isikhumbuzo samadodana asadlulayo, asigqibele. Kodwa akwenze njani? Ukuqeda ukungabi leqiniso lokutshona kwamalanga, lobuhle obumi bodwa bezintaba? Endaweni yalokho, akulalutho oluhambayo. Amatshe, alokhu enjalo ehlangene njengakudala, amadwala athulisile. Kawaguqukanga. Izihlahla azilamahlamvu njalo zithwele ukuthula sengathi zifile. Amanina akhangelele ukuthi masinyane nje kube lemikenke emangalisayo ematsheni. Alindele ukudabuka komkenke, umsindo ozawasonga njengombani njalo awasoze adinge ukuthi abuze uma uzibuse ngeqiniso eselapha, kumbe uma sibili, lolu lulusuku olutsha. Amanina azizwa elokuziqhenya okukhulu. Ayatshiseka ngokuziqhenya lokhu. Le yimizwa alayo mayelana lalabo abaphendukileyo, imizwa ewaphakamisayo kakhulu, ewavikelayo okwamagama, amanina lawa asamelana lokungabikhona okubuhlungu okumangalisayo, njalo le yimizwa ezwisisekayo okwamagama, eyemukelayo kakhulu, engafuni okunengi, ebalulekileyo okwamagama, engatshengisi ukukhathazeka,

elesihawu esikhulu, ezelwe luchuku, lokhu kuziqhenya, okugcwele inkazimulo lobuthakathaka.

Ubunzima buyasuka lapha usuku olutsha luvela. Lolusuku olutsha. Indawo yokuqalisa futhi, ukuhlanyela ithemba uxotshe ukudela, ukuvuselelwa kutsha. Yonke into iguqulwe. Usuku lulula, kalunzima; lulula njengehlamvu. Amanina ahamba esiza ngayo yonke indledlana ebhodayo izombazomba, engena ephuma emgwaqweni omkhulu ukuze usuku luwathole, luthole imizimba yawo elangazelela ukuthintwa ngokunye okutsha. Asusa amaqhiye awo ankanyazelayo emakhanda awo awaphosele phezulu njengempiko zemvevane. Abingelela umoya ngamalembu anxitshanisiweyo abomvu, aluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka laluhlaza okotshani. Amalembu ayale lale ngaphansi kwezandla eziphakanyisiweyo, leminwe edingayo. Inwele zawo zintsha loba sezaze zabamhlophe ngenxa yokumelela. Okweminyakanyaka asafunda kuphela ukuphosa amazwi awo, esuka esivalweni esiya esibukweni, engelathemba lokuwakhulula, kodwa khathezi asengagida emayezini. Ahambisa ingalo zawo njengezithembiso. Azunguza amaqhiye awo esuka kwenye ingalo esiya kwenye njalo. Aklabalale, abukele amazwi awo etsholobela esiyaphezulu esibhakabhakeni, eqonda ezintabeni zeGulati.

Ahlabela izingoma zenhlabathi ezitshiya ikuseni ifuquza. Akhalas emini, egonjolozelwe yisibhakabhaka esiluhlaza tshoko lomnukwe zulu. Ingqondo zawo sekuyibunandi obugalula entokozweni; ayandenda, ejabula. Imizwa yawo isiphosa ibengcwele, isiphakanyisiwe ubuhlungu bawo abuzwisiseki. Amazwi aphumela phandle, ngalokwemithunzi yothuli olwephukayo lube bomvu, njalo ibemide. Awaso soze agalule emigidweni esethulini oluphakamayo - lemikhumbulweni yokuzonda lobuhlungu. Awaso afe: okuyikulandelana kwembal ebuhlungu, amaphupho okuwelwa yingozi, kumbe intambama zokumangala lokwesaba. Lemisindo esuka eGulati, okufanele ukuthi ngabivele seyababulala ayisoze yabagalulisa. Ukulahla ithemba, ukuqhushisa isivalo sivalwe saqina nko, lapha isivalo sivuleka sikhamisa gelekenqo Isivalo, ingqondo. Uthuli luphenduka lusiba yinkungu ngaphezu kwa

matshe akhatshana, uthuli okwakumele lubhidlize ingqondo zawo, kodwa kaluzange. Lamuhla ahamba phezu komhlabathi owomileyo, engafanga, ekukhanyeni okudakayo, njalo engatshiyi lachatha lokwesaba, egoqelwe lusuku oluphuphumayo, ethinta ingatsha lephezulu yezihlahla, usuku olulemithambo, ephila, engafanga, egcwele ngezimanga leziphetho ezintsha. Ayakholisa ebumnandini obukhulu lemisindweni. Konke lokho okukhanyayo phakathi kwawo kukhanyisisa kakhulu futhi: isibhakabhaka, amathala omhlatshelo eGulati, ithemba. Umoya uvunguza udabula phakathi kwamaqaqa, lamazwi awo, imizimba yawo ivumelana. Amazwi awo avusa ijuba elizilaleleyo. Liyaphapha lidabula phakathi kokukhanya okudladlazelayo ngaphezulu. Uzibuse kasoze abuye futhi, njalo ummangaliso omuhle kakhulu walokho ukula amanina, lobuhlungu emihlane yawo, ekgobeni kwamazwi awo, lasendololwaneni zawo ezingembathiswa ezingezitshaya umoya.

Abesifazana abatsha balahla ontanga yabo abesaba ukuba labo endaweni ezithuleyo, njalo ababelesela ukuthi bahlangane esilindweni sebhasi njalo phambi kwabonina ababavikelayo. Abesifazana laba abatsha bafika esitolo sakoThandabantu ngenjabulo elenjongo entsha. Benza konke abangakwenelisa ukuze bavumbulule ukuthi isineke sabo esibuhlungu kangaka simayelana lani, njalo ukuthi singamiswa na, ngenye nje indlela? Kambe singenelisa ukumiswa na njalo sisuthiswe? Bekhululekile njalo bezithandela, bathi tshelele eceleni kwamadoda amadala alingana labanewabo abangamazibulo, amadoda avela empini, aphenduke elengqondo zawo ziphelele njalo zihlangene ngaphandle kokukhangeleka kwawo lokhuyana okomuntu osewadabula amazwe okwenza amankazana esabe kancane, adideke kancane, abe lamadlabuzane kancane, okuwenza azizwe elezibindi sengathi ahloma izandla zawo emlotheni olula oqanda okotshinda, lapho, okungenzeka ukuthi ilangabi lingaphonguthi lavu, njalo kutshe. Amadoda la apheleleyo asethe vumbu phakathi kwabo enza onina bagcwale in-yembezi ngokumangala kokuphenduka kwawo engawelwanga yin-

gozi. Alapha. Alobuso obutshengisa ukuswela lokulahleka kodwa alokuthinteka koluju lweganga. Ingalo zawo, inwele zawo, zigezwa ngamahlamvu anukelelayo. Ayala ukugeza ngesepa yeLifebuoy leLux ethengelwe wona esitolo sakoThandabantu njalo ageza imizimba yawo ngemithi esuka emaqaqeni, esuka emfuleni, njengezidalwa ezingaziphakamisiyo. Avikela isizungu alaso. Amahlombe awo ase-bomvu ngenxa yensaba zelanga eselitshona. Abesifazana bawakhonza amadoda la akhokhela indlela yonke eqonda kuleya indawo yokucina abafisa ukuyifinyelela njalo osekulesikhathi eside isengqondweni zabo.

Abesifazana laba, bexokozela njalo beswela isineke, sebethole inkululeko eyenza amazwi abo avuthe. Bazi konke okukhona okungaziwa mayelana laloba yini ekhona engaziwa, njalo sebezwe eyabo inkululeko sebeqinile, ngoba yebo, ngempela ngeyabo, le inkululeko. Kabazange behluleke ukuyizwisisa. Baphethe leyo nkululeko ezandleni zabo. Bekhangela ngamehlo engqondo bengaphazanyiswa lutho bazakuba labantwana abazabizwa kuthiwe ngoHappiness, oProsperity, oFortune, oTrue Love, oMoreblessing, oJoy, laboCeasefire. Kuyini okungehlula? Amabizo azalandelana njengembali esuka enlimini zabo . . . OBeauty, oCourage oFreedom. Bonke abantwababo bazazuzakala ngesikhathi sokukhululwa ebugqilini. Bezalelwa ezandleni zabo njengesambulo, njengamaluba evuleka. Kuzadingeka ukuthi baphe abantwababo amabizo aphakathi azabatholisa amandla...oMasotsha, oMandla oNgqabutho. Amabizo okuqinisa amaphupho.

Abesifazana laba ngabesifazana abangazenzisiyo bakhululeke kakhulu emhlabeni lapha, injabulo nje kuphela yiyo egijima emithanjeni yabo. Abalasifiso sokufuywa babe ngabantu babanye, bagonjolozelwe ngothango, kuthiwe lo ngowami, kodwa bafuna ukuthi banakwe, bathandwe ilanga lonke lize litshone, ukuthandwa njengamajuba. Bafuna kuphela ukuphathwa njengento eliqiniso elidlulisileyo ukuthi uyikholwe. Bafuna ukwazi injabulo epheleleyo lamadoda athwele ukukhangeleka okomuntu olahlekileyo emehlweni awo; lamadoda ahamba ngendlela eyenyanyekayo, engathi alahlekile,

sengathi umhlabathi uyanyikinyeka ngaphansi kwenyawo zawo, engahambi ngitsho njengalokho abakucabanga engqondweni ukuthi amaqhawe kumele abeyikho; la amadoda, akade elobunzima obokukhangela ngqo owesifazana okwemizuzu emibili nje qha engavalanga amehlo awo kumbe akhangela eceleni; alokubobotheka okungalimaziyo okwenza abesifazana baphele amandla emadolweni njalo bagoqe izandla zabo phezu kwamakhanda abo; indoda le sengathi ithi kayibulalanga yiloba ngubani, lokhu yikukhuluma nje ngoba phela ilizwe lifuna amaqhawe, amafulegi, lemikhosi, njalo lomqondo wokuzinikela. Kambe kakwazi na lokho owesifazane? Ilizwi lowesilisa lizwakala lincenga owesifazane ukuthi ayekele ukuhlola amanxeba akhe njalo angamsithi ekuboneni kwakhe amaqaka. Ekuqaleni kolunye lolunye usuku olutsha umbuzo usendebeni zowesifazane, lanxa uyabe ungakhulunywanga. Kambe wakwenza? Kambe wabulala indoda emhlophe?

Owesilisa umupha igabha lenhlanzi okuthiwa ngama "sardines" njalo lomribhoni olithanga ukuthi awelukele enweleni zakhe ezelukiweyo, njalo ubuza owesifazane ingabe uzakuba ngumbalisi na njalo afundise abantwababo ukuthi bathi a e i o u... imilomo yabo ivaliwe. Owesilisa kacini khonapho ngemibuzo yakhe. Uyabuza. Kulungile na uma ephathisa ekudalweni kwalaba bantwana, khathesi, ngaphansi kwalesi sihlahla esilengalo yaso ethinta phansi, ngaphansi kwaleli ilitshe elikhudumalayo eliginye usuku lonke, ngaphansi kwalesi isixuku sezinga lamaluba aso aphephetha umoya, khonapha, ngaphansi kwalesi isibhakabhaka esikhamisileyo, phezu kwetshebetshebe loMfula uKwakhe, umhlabathi owome kakhulu okhona kulo lonke eleKezi langale kwayo, njalo ngempela, leli tshebetshebe lomfula elimunya inyawo zabo lingagcina yiloba yiwuphi umhlobo wemfihlo kugoqela leyabo, owesilisa uyabuza, njalo owesifazana unikela yonke inkululeko esezandleni zakhe, angekuze ikhanda lakhe phakathi kwalobo buthakathaka bobusuku, njalo owesifazana wemukela leyo milenze eseyaqansa amatshe atshelelayo njalo lezintaba ezilukhuni kakhulu ezeGulati. Ukuthula lokulolozela kwembesa yonke ingoxo, wonke

umqanso njalo kukhwela kusehla ngezithende zowesifazane ezilindeleyo.

Kulapho kuphela owesilisa eselala, ingalo zakhe zizunguzeka zisiyale lale, ilizwi lakhe selimnyama ukwedlula ubusuku, njalo bubanekwe zinkanyezi, lapho owesifazana avuka khona ambandezele phansi. Sekunjalo-ke usesazi ukuthi uhambo lwakhe lale indoda lude njalo lulohlupho, njalo lokuthi angeke ahlale eyitshiya ubusuku bunye ngabunye isemaphutsheni ayo. Owesifazane uyethuka, ufikelwa ngamadlabuzane, uselahlekile. Indoda le iyalala, kodwa amehlo avuleke akhamisa. Ekuseni owesifazane kayikhangeli kodwa ukhangela ezintabeni zeGulati ezigombolozelayo. Owesifazane angeke athi kwenziwe. Loba kambe ebobothekile njalo wantshela iqiniso mayelana layo yonke into, owesifazane angeke athi kwenziwe. Ukuthi imthathe imuse khonale ukuyabona izintaba eseduze kwazo, ukuthinta amatshe akhatshana, amanzi akhatshana lesibhakabhaka, ukuyawela endaweni enkulu ekhamisileyo lapha ingqondo yowesilisa eyazulazula khona, isiwa, kokuphela kokuphela, ngitsho lalapho owesifazane ehambisa indebe zakhe njalo anyenyeze igama lowesilisa eliselimini lwakhe. Owesifazane angeke athi kwenziwe, sibili angeke. Ngitsho loba engakutshongo, engakucabangi. Ngitsho loba ngabe ekutshilo yena ngokwakhe owesilisa. Ukucambalala eceleni kwakhe owesilisa ngaphansi komthunzi wobusuku yikho ukuba khatshana leKezi angakwenelisa ukuthi ahambe laye khona. Eduze lamadwala abutshelezi njalo lemhlambini wezinkanyezi, khonale. Owesifazane uqandisa inyawo zowesilisa, athukulule intambo, adonse, abhodise izicathulo zesikhumba esezadabukayo zabamhlotshana ezikhumula, ezikhupha kuye.

Abesifazana abaphendukayo bevela egangeni bafika beleyabo indlela ephezulu eyokuziphakamisa. Bachasisa umhlaba ngendlela ethshyeneyo. Bangabalwi, bayilokho nje, ababhidliza yonke imigoqo eyayibavalela, bangena iganga, ye, njengamadoda. Kodwa ngaleso sikhathi babengabesifazana njalo batshonjalo, bakhuluma njalo, njalo bangena iganga, njengamadoda. Ukuthi balwe njengamadoda, futhi

bakutsho, ukuthi balwe, njengabesifazana abalwayo. Benza izitshengiselo zokuvuma ezafana lokungemukeli okwakwenzakele.

Kabaxolisi ngezibindi zabo lokungabikhona kwabo okwesikhathi eside njalo kabacatshi kumbe ukuphambuka endleleni. Laba abesifazana bazwisisa ngcono kakhulu ukwedlula yiloba yibaphi abanye balabo besifazana abatsha abachitha impilo yabo yonke beseMfuleni uKwakhe abangenelisa ngayo ukuzwisisa mayelana laloba yini kumbe ingqe ngubani njalo obatshele kanjalo, hatshi ngamazwi, kodwa abenza bazi ngokuphelelyo njalo kuhle sibili, babavumela ukuthi bacabangele, babavumela ukuthi bamangale nje ukuthi lezo ndebe ezithuleyo zingani, ukuthi lezo ngalo, ezizunguzwa zisuka enqulwini zifika ehlombe, zimayelana lani.

Laba abesifazana balokhu begqoka izigqoko zabo zempini ezenza bangabonakali nxa bephakathi kwegusu khona ukulwa sekwamiswa, behamba phakathi kweKezi begqoke amajambo abo anzima, izigqoko zabo zifana lamatshe lezihlahla, njalo imikhono yazo emide igoqiwe yafika esihlakaleni. Bathwele amabharethi amnyama, bahlala phezu kombundu ophezulu esitolo sakoThandabantu njalo babeke izandla zabo phezu kwamadolo abo afinyeziweyo. Bagoqa indebe zabo batshaye umlozwi, baphosele phezu izivimbo zezimbodlela baphinde bazigame, baqagaqage amakhasi omumbu bawaphosele abafana abancane abeqa bawagame engakatshayi phansi. Bavala amehlo abo njalo batshwathike amabharethi ezikhwameni ezisemilenzeni yamabhulugwe abo, bakopele, bakhohlwe ngazo. Bayabukela, belapha phezu abesifazana abatsha bacabanga ukuthi inkululeko ingaphathwa esandleni, ikhiwe njengamanzi, ihatshulwe nje. Bacabanga ukuthi amanzi angahlamba ahlanze yiloba yisiphi isilonda njalo anyamalalise amanxeba ome njengetshebetsebe likaKwakhe. Laba abesifazana bazi isimanga sinye vo, esokubukela amanzi eginywa nguMfula uNyande izulu selinile, uma lithe lana, njalo bathatha itshebetsebe likaNyande elivumela amanzi ukuthi atshone ngokuphangisa babone sengathi yinto yokubahlekisa nje, eyinjabulo yabo engelamsebenzi, lesipho sabo. Laba abesifazana abatsha balembali ehlangeneyo njalo

engaphazanyiswa lutho, bathi bengazake babeke unyawo lwabo ludlule bayengale koMfula uKwakhe bacabange ukuthi bangelapha isizungu esisezandleni zendoda, bayibambe, ize ikhululeke okunjengakulolo suku eyazalwa ngalo, ize ingabe isakhumbula ibala inkanyezi phezulu, ibala inkanyezi nganye nganye ize iphelelwe ngumoya njalo isilungele ukubamba ilizwi layo eliklabalalayo ilifake ezandleni zayo, ukuthi ilwe. Ngemilenze yabo engelatshatha njalo lamazwi abo abuthakathaka lamajwabu abo angonakalanga ndawo, bazakwenza ukuthi ilanga elitsha liphume njalo litshone ukuze izolo likhohlakale. Isikhathi singaqala lapha, engalweni zabo.

Amasotsha esifazane, ubuso bawo bukhanya bulotshwe indawo ezingeke zazakala, ukudana okungeke kwaqedwa kusemehlweni awo, engejwayelanga ukuphonguma masinya athule zwi njengalokhu, ukuhlala ndawonye komzimba lengqondo, engasezinzulani, engasethuselwa kumbe ukwethusela. La amanina agcina ukuthula kwawo angakhulumi lutho esola kumbe ephikisa, kodwa azimela khatshana elokhu esaqoqa bonke ubufakazi angabenelisa mayelana lezifiso eziqakathekiswa ngomunye lomunye wabo. Lesi yisikhathi sekumiswe ukulwisana. Lapha sebesenelisa bazaziletha ukuthi baye lapha abafuna ukuyakhona. Isibonakaliso abasiphayo kuphela esokungathandi ulutho yikunyikinya amakhanda bewesa ngapha langapha njalo bakhangele kude, bakhanye bephatheke kuhle, lapha amanina amatsha engena esitolo sakoThandabantu egqoke amapitikoti, kumbe ephethe izambuleni eziqamukileyo ezethenga amagcobo, iVaseline, egqoke amasandali esikhumba kumbe ehamba ngenyawo zinjalo. Ayalinda engakatsho lutho kumbe ukwethula umbono. Ahlafuna amatshingamu athengwe ngabalutshwane koThandabantu.

Bahlala belokhu begqoke izigqoko zabo ezibenza bangabonakali lula besegangeni njalo bahwatsha imihlanga yegwayi babheme bemingaphansi kwesihlahla somganu. Baphakamisa ubuso babo bakhanye bechazeka mhlawumbe yisibhakabhaka kumbe ngabantu abedlulayo onina. Bayazihambela nje bengajahanga beqonda esitolo sakoThandabantu; kancane, engathi balesikhathi esinengi okwempilo yabo yonke

ukuthi bacabange ukuthi uzibuse umayelana lani, impilo yabo yonke, besusa unyawo belubeka phambi kolunye, impilo yabo yonke bephosa uhleko lusedlula uphiko lwenyoni. Kabaphangisi kumbe ukujaha, abalandlala ebakhathazayo abafuna ukuyisuthisa, akulabuhlungu abangeke bafuna ukubukhohlwa. Uzibuse yisikhathi sokukhokha umoya bephuma empini, ingqondo ingaziqoqa kutsha yona ngokwayo isenza isinqumo ephatheka kuhle kuso, kungelakujaha, ngesilinganiso sokuza kosuku lunye ngalunye ngendlela ejayelekileyo, njalo luvuleka futhi njengeluba.

Ahlala phezu kwamabhokisi angelalutho awokuphathela izimbodlela, njengamadoda, esesuka lapha abukela ilanga kungathi ukubukela ukutshona kwelanga yinto nje elolozelayo lapha uchitha isikhathi; kodwa ukubukela ukutshona kwelanga usesitolo sakoThandabantu lokubukela ukutshona kwelanga usegangeni umbhobho esandleni sakho, kuyahambelana, kodwa, yizehlakalo ezitshiyene kakhulu. Ayafunda, ngesineke langomoya omuhle, ukuthi kunjani ukubukela ukutshona kwelanga ukoThandabantu. Ukubukela ilanga litshona ungelambhobho esandleni sakho, ngakho-ke kulo umbukiso abaxotshana lawo bayakhohlwa ukuthi bangabesilisa kumbe abesifazane kodwa ukuthi bayizidalwa ezilimeleyo, ezilamehlo adingayo, njalo balesifiso esikhulu esokuthi kube lokubalibazisayo kulokhu. Yinto abayidinga ngezinhliziyo zabo.

Amadoda osekuleminyaka emineni ehlezi ehamba esiya koThandabantu ukuyabukela ilanga, ukuyatshonisa ilanga njalo lokuxoxa ngalokho asanda kukuzwa mayelana lempi esegangeni, ayingxenye yobuhle baleli vurandi lomsindo walo ngakho-ke ayingxenye edingekayo eyendawo ebizwa ngokuthi yiKezi ngoba iKezi iqala njalo icine esitolo sakoThandabantu, la amadoda aseKezi asukile ahamba engadondi kumbe ukumangala ngokususwa kwawo, ahamba ayan-gaphansi kwesihlahla somganu lezitulo zawo ezibazwe ngezandla njalo eselapha abukela abesifazana laba becicima ubuhle obumangalisayo okwedlula laloba yini ake ayibona itshona kumbe isitsha, ukuma kwabo kuphelele ukwedlula okwenyawo zawo eziphezu komhlabathi

weKezi. Abuka ekhangele ngecele lelihlo, ezizwa ephela amathe, ekhangeka njalo elenhlanhla. Njalo amadoda la, anyawo azizake zishiye uMfula uKwakhe kumbe ukuze zizule yiloba kuyiphi indawo ekhatshana kulesitolo sakoThandabantu, ehlisa amehlo awo kokuphela njalo kakuhle, ehlise lamahlombe awo futhi, njalo adonsele phansi kakhulu ingowane zawo ezidabukileyo njalo esezajujuka. Athi esezisole kanje abe elunguza lezo zicathulo zesibuthweni, kulezo ngalo ezifana lendukwana, abesekhangela ethe njo le khatshana, ethabile kodwa engahlanyukelwanga. Avika lawo mehlo kumbe lawo mathebe angaphansi kwamabhanti athe nama. Amabele, edonselwe phezulu butshapha engathi kasilutho kodwa ngesinye nje isitho somzimba lapha okungatholakala khona impilo yisidalwa esiyiluntu njalo siphile, amabele yisakhiwo nje kuphela emzimbeni, njengokugoba okusehlombe; into eluncedo kodwa engamangalisiyo eyisitho somzimba. Amadoda ayazi kodwa angeke alinge axoxe ngokuthi kambe lawo mabele ayiphatha njani imibhobho, aphatha njani amaphupho, njalo lokuthi angeke esenelisa ukuphatha loba yini ubusuku bonke engasidubo kangako, engelabunzima obudlula izifiso ezibhidlizekileyo.

Ibhasi yeKezi iyafika ngemini yantambama njengenjayelo. Ithe mu uthuli, insimbi zayo zikhala njalo igalula ebunzimeni babantu lempahla ezithweleyo, ithi gomongo iphinde ithi ndundubali ikhuphuka ebholohweni ibisithi fikiyani masinya lapha okuphelela khona umgwaqo oledhara; amavili atshaya emgwaqweni olubhuqu agebhe ayele lale ephuma emgwaqweni, ihambe ngecele iqonde esihlahleni somganu; uthuli selwenze iyezi eliqatha ngomsindo wamavili oza ngokuphangisa, ukuma masinya nje lobunzima. Abesifazana laba babuka amadoda esehla ebhasini yakoShoe-Shine njalo kababobotheki kumbe ukuthuka. Ukukhangela kwabo kutshengisa ukusuthiseka, imicabango yabo kayiphazanyiswanga. Amadoda asefikile evela koBulawayo ahamba engesabi njalo enyathela ngonanzelelo engena esitolo. Ayema akhokhe umoya eseqanse isitebhisi sakuqala, esekhangwe ngamazwi azwakala ehlukele. Ayangena phakathi. Aphuma esephethelozimbodlela zeFanta leCream Soda sezivuliwe.

Eyama ezinsikeni akhangele indawo ngonanzelelo njalo ahlole umoya. Asebale okwaneleyo njalo ayazi ukuthi abesifazana laba kabasimifanekiso nje ekumaphephandaba agoqiweyo ase-makhwapheni awo abika ukunqoba ngenani eliphezulu kakhulu okomkhokheli omutsha kodwa ngabantu angababingelela ngonanzelelo langenhlonipho. Kodwa kawakwenzi. Abesifazana laba bazi amagusu izulu lisina njalo lelanga litshisa, basinda emnyameni wawo lekukhanyeni kwawo, konke kusethusela ngokulinganayo. Abesifazana laba, baphila khathesi, behlezi phezulu kombundu lo obutshelazi, bayibufakazi obuqinileyo bokuphepha okukhona, obesibindi, obokulwisa. Bayaphila khathesi njalo akhangela esedlulisa amehlo phezulu kwamahlombe abo angathi ngabantu abangabonakaliyo, abathakazelela izinto eziphambili le, izinto eziyimfihlo, izinto ingqondo zabo kuphela ezazivele zizazi, bayaphila lapha khathesi njalo baseduze lemizimba yabo njengalokho okungamelwa zingqondo zabo ezikhathazekileyo njalo ezifisa ukwazi. Abasindayo, bahlezi, lapha khathesi, kuleli ivurandi, lamuhla, bekhanya bemangalisa njalo bengaphazanyiswa lutho engathi bebengekho nje okwesikhatshana bekwenye indawo enhle, bedobha amaluba eganga ezihotsheni ezithuleyo zomhlaba. Hatshi, iminwe yabo kayenzelwanga imisebenzi ephathwa ngobuciko obunjengalokho, bebengekho okobusuku nje bekwenye indawo. Kwenye indawo emnyama okokuthi lapha sebephenduka, njengalokhu asebekwenzile, beza bethwele indawo le emnyama ekukhangeleni kwabo. Kabangeneki okokuthi amadoda akoBulawayo angenelisa kuphela ukulinda ukuthi bona bakhulume ulutho kuqala, kodwa ahlanguka lokuthula kwabafuleyo.

Uma ngabe bebengakhuluma kuqala bona njalo baphendulane ngamazwi amalutshwane bekungafana lokuthinta amahlamvu manye eguswini athintwe ngabesifazana laba, ingatsha zinye, lezibhakabhaka abazibonayo lazo zingaba lapha ngaphansi kwalolu uphahla lwamazenge. Amadoda aqhubeka emi bucwala, eseyame abakhatshana kwalaba abesifazana, khatshana lokukhangela kwabo okuhlabayo, engalaqiniso lamazwi, ilizwi elidingekayo elingabekezelelwa, elin-

gasetshenziswa, ukuthi bakhulumisane labesifazana laba abalamandla njalo abathuleyo abakhanya kungelalutho olubaphazamisayo. Ukubulawa kwamajuba, kwehlukile yini egangeni? Angathanda ukulandiselwa ngolutho olulula njengakhonokho, athole impendulo, mayelana lokubulala amajuba. Nxa engabeka umbuzo wawo ngonanzelelo njen-galokho, bekhululekile, kubesegcekeni, mhlawumbe engathola im-pendulo engasuthisa yonke imibuzo yawo. Babulala amajuba na, uma kunjalo, bakwenza njani? Uma beqale ngokubuza ngamajuba, kungeke kwenzeka yini ukuthi esinye isambulo singaqabuka sesi-dalulekile, iqiniso abangeke balicabanga, umcijo omangalisayo onga-batholisa labo ukwemukeleka, umcijo mayelana lempi le ongaphezu kokuzwisisa kwabo. Endaweni yokuthi abuze umbuzo lo owodwa ase-qogelela ezingqondweni zawo ukuma kwalaba abesifazana, esazi ukuthi kunengi kakhulu okumele ngabe akwenzela abesifazana laba ukuthi azame ukukufanisa, ukuba lesikwelede lowesifazana, es-okuphila kwakhe, yinto enkulu kakhulu ingqondo zabo ezingeke za-melana layo, khathezi nje, kulonaleli ivurandi. Ukuba lesikwelede sesifiso, lokho kungaphangisa njalo kulula, kodwa impilo, ukuhamba kwayo lokuthuthuka kwayo, lokhu ayaphangisa akuxotshela khatshana njalo abuyisele ingqondo zawo ekuhloleni ijwabu elicwazimulayo elimnyama elalaba abesifazana abangaphazanyiswanga, abalomusa olingana lokwenelisa kwabo ukulimaza. Ukukhanga kwabo kungeke kwaphikiswa njalo amadoda ayabuka, anathe amanamunede awo, an-gene esitolo esebuyisela izimbodlela ezingaselalutho, aphenduke abuyeke empahleni zawo ayehlala phansi esamendeni njengoba wonke amabhokisi ezimbodlela esehlezi abantu. Iminwe ihluba amakhasi amaganu amnandi, zingaki impilo esezaphelela kuleziya ngalo, mangaki amajuba?

Amadoda ayakhangela njalo azivumele ukuthi ajatshuliswe ngamathuba angeza lenkululeko. Ngubani owayengakucabanga ukuthi ngelinye ilanga, khonapha kuyonale indawo, babengabuthana labesi-fazana abangabalwi njalo balalele ukungeniswa kwebhola egolini emdlalweni ophakathi kweHighlanders leDynamos umenyezelwa

erediyweni ephathwa ngezandla ngasikhathi sinye wona emi ekhamise imilomo engasanelisi ukucabanga yiloba yini eligugu kubo bonke, ngitsho laye uzibuse kumbe ibhola elihlohlweyo, kungekho ngitsho abangakuxoxa. Ayethuka atatazele esesazi ukuthi akusoze kuphinde kube lesikhathi esinje futhi njalo ngesikhathi esizayo esebona abesifazana laba kuzakuba kungaseyibo laba abesifazana njalo akusoze kube lesikhathi esinjengasonalesi ngitsho lokuthi lesi yiso kuphela isikhathi esenza ukuthi umoya uqhube lamazwi awo anyamalale njalo akulamazwi angatholakala awokubingelela owesifazana phakathi kwemini enkulu. Akulamazwi ngitsho. Ayaphumputha ehluleke. Engakholwa ukwehluleka kwawo asuka athule okwesikhathi eside. Ayazilingana, asesehluleka ukuhambahamba ngenxa yokufisa ukwazi, kanti ngasikhathi sinye ayesaba kakhulu ukuthi akhulume, azizwa elula nje, esesaba into eyingozi angakaze ayizame. Asemi njengezipoko. Afuna ukubuza ukuthi kungabe ukhona omunye wabo oseke wahlangana labakhokheli abatsha belizwe waxhawulana labo? Angeke aqale ukubuza umbuzo oqondana lomuntu oyedwa njalo owobuhlanya obunjalo ngakho agqibela umbuzo emilonyeni yawo. Eyama ezinsikeni lawo njalo azimisele, esenza enye ingxenye yevurandi eyawo. Ayazilingana, njengemvevane elangabini.

Kubetha umoya oqanda mnandi. Abesifazana bayawuthanda umthunzi lo oqanda njengokuqanda kwamanzi.

1981-1986

ISAHLUKO SESIHLANU

IZIBANE ZESITALADINI KANYE lamavurandi abanekiweyo, iminyango, izindlu zokunathela, izitolo zokuthungela impahla, izilindo zamabhasi lemikoto okuthengiselwa khona inhlanzi. Abathunga izicathulo besemishasheni. Lamadoda athengisa uchago agqoke ezid-abukileyo njalo esezajujuka amabheqe ayeluhlaza, abathengisa i-ayizikrimu abaxoxa lezifebe ezingalutho ukukhohlwa, labatshayeli bama-ambulensi abalegazi elomele enzitsheni zabo. Omyeni bathwala izinkwa bezisa kuzithandwa zabo, abafundisi abafake amangilazi emehlweni, izinja zikhonkotha amasisita azivale ubuso avela ezikolo zabanali. Kulophahla olupendiweyo olwezindlu lezibane ezisemithangaleni ezikhanya kakhulu. Ucingo lwameva lendawo zokuthengisela ezisegcekeni. Izinqe ezinqunu ziyagida, zigida umgido othiwa yiJerusalema ewolu encinyane yedolobho zigidela umeya wakuqala omnyama. Amabhasi ezikolo lamabhera awemnyango. Impukane ezinkulu zinatha amanzi emagojaneni aseMgwaqweni weLu-veve. Izindlu zokulungisela imingcwabo zifakwa amakha ezixuku zehayibhisikasi.

Impi iyaqalisa. Sekubekwe umthetho wokwenqabela abantu ukuhamba bekhululekile. Izinto sezimi manzonzo. Akusavunyelwa ukuhambahamba. Ukubekwa phansi kwezikhali sekuphelile. Kuqala ezitaladini, ukugqitshelwa kwemikhumbulo. Amathambo asevuka.

Ayavuka. Wonke umgwaqo ophuma koBulawayo uvalwe ngamasotsha lamapholisa, benyakazela njengobunyonyo. Kuyo yonke imigwaqo abahambayo bayamiswa. Amabhomba. Omaquphula. Amabhomba ajikwa ngezandla. Umkhumbulo usunyamalele. Uzibuse uyacina. Imibhobho iyavuka. Ivuka kutsha. Ngo 1981.

ISAPHLUKO SESITHUPHA

IKEZI.

Indoda ibeka isandla sayo phezu kwehlombe lenxele lowesifazane. Imicabango yowesifazane iyasabalala, ngumlotha ovunguzwe ngumoya ongenganani. Owesilisa ubandezela isandla sakhe phansi, phezu kwengalo yowesifazane ezilengelayo nje ngenxa yokulinyazwa. Owesilisa uphendula umzimba wowsifazane ewukhangelisa kuye, edinga olunye ulutho kowsifazane angalwephula, kodwa akuselalutho olusasele kowsifazane olungephulwa. KuNonceba, kulephunga lale indoda kuphela, ukusingatha okulesihluku kwezandla zayo, ububomvu okwegazi bezicathulo zayo, ubude bentamo yayo, kanye lokukhangelisa igobele eduze. Imicabango yowesifazane ikhatshana kakhulu okungelinganiswe. Hatshi...hatshi...hatshi bo...

Phakathi kwabo kulokungabikhona okulinganiswa yikuhlaba ikhefu lokuthula kokukhumbulelana. Mhlawumbe, kukho lokhu okunye ukungabikhona, ingathola amandla amatsha njalo izwe olunye ulutho oluhambelana lomusa hatshi uzwelo. Lukhatshana, uzwelo, endodeni enje. Ingakhohlwa nje ukuthi kungani ilapha, ukuthi kungani owesifazane elayo, lokuthi ungubani owesifazane. Yona layo ingamangaliswa yikuphonguba lapha kwayo okusamdalo.

Idolo liyaphakama ukuthi lithinte ingaphansi yemibala yowesifazane, ngemuva kowsifazane, lisuke likhwele lemilenze yowesifazane, lihamba lisiyale lale. Hlala khonapho, phezulu kwedolo lami.

Indoda iyasuka okwesikhatshana, ngonanzelelo, ibe isibuyisela ukuthinta kwayo emzimbeni wowesifazane. Ibuyisela ukuthinta kwayo engathi yinto ebiyisuse ingelamvumo, izizwa ilecala, kodwa ikwenza njengesenzo somusa.

Iseduze, ithinta owesifazane, owesifazane uyakwazi ekwenzayo, lapha okulezandla zayo khona, imibala yayo, amadolo ayo, intamo leyana, ilizwi leliyana, sekunjalo, useleqiniso lengalo zayo. Kuphela sekunjalo.

Imicabango yowesifazane ibalulekile njengeyowesilisa - imvava zengilazi. Kuqakathekile ukuthi azi lapha owesilisa akhona ngesikhatshana engekho. Owesifazane ulicimbi – angacatsha, konke lokhu kusenzakala engqondweni yakhe, angene phakathi, agoqane, agoqe amadolo akhe lendololwane zakhe, zonke izitho zomzimba wakhe ezenelisa ukugoba, ezigoqekayo.

Ngilindele. Ngiyaphila, khathesi, ngihambisana lemicabango yayo munye ngamunye. Ngiyaphefumula. Ibunzi lami, liyadikiza. Owesifazane uvala amehlo akhe njalo umzimba wakhe ulalele ukuhamba kowesilisa kulandela munye ngamunye wemicabango yakhe. Uyaphefumula. Uyalinyazwa.

Indoda ingena emzimbeni wowesifazane engathi ingena emhomeni ongelalutho. Akulalutho owesifazane angalwenza ukuze azisindise. Iyamdumela ekhalweni, isandla sayo sonke siphezu kwesisu ngesibindi esikhulu. Ibandezela phansi. Imdonsela kuyo. Uyathikaza. Imfuqela phansi ngamandla. Uyazidela. Usegobele emuva emzimbeni wayo. Ibamba umzimba wakhe njengesigodo esigotshisiweyo. Imdonsela ukhalo lowesifazane ekugobeni kwengalo yayo. Usebumbeke waba sesimeni sengalo yayo elindeleyo; njengempande inamathele elitsheni eliqinileyo.

Indoda imenza isihluku okudiliza ubunguye bakhe. Ukuzonda kwakhe kuyaphuphuma ngolaka olukhulu. Amathe akhe asebaba okwenyongo. Ufisa ukukhuluma; ukukhafa. Ufuqekela phambili, khatshana kwayo. Iseduze. Idolo, ihlombe, umbala, kuhamba phezu kwamathangazi akhe. Ingalo yayo imanzi, iyafudumala, umnuko

osuka ekunyakazeni kwayo kunye ngakunye lubundu olujiyileyo lwenkanuko.

Idonsela umzimba wakhe phezulu, njalo imbambe ithulise in-ganyikinyeki. Ngokuphangisa nje, amathangazi akhe ezwa ubuhlungu, okungathi ngamanzi atshisayo kwehla kujuluka kusiya emadolweni akhe. Idonsela umzimba wakhe wonke emzimbeni wayo. Ithule. Iy-isilo, esilawo wonke amandla okufohloza sitshabalalise nya. Yena owesifazane, engofileyo, elayo yonke imizwa yosebhuqiwe.

Ukuphepha ekuhlaselweni ungalandele. Le yimicabango yakhe owe-sifazane, into enjengamanzi atshisayo andendayo. Ulandela ukudonsa kwamandla esandla sayo njengemephu njalo ahambe nyovane, izithende kuqala, uhambo lokhu lusiba lude kakhulu lusibalude kakhulu lapha elalela ubuhlungu obumangalisayo. Imibala yakhe iya-hamba. Inyathelo...emuva...inyathelo...emuva...ngamazwane akhe kuphela afika emhlabathini. Iyamdonsa. Uhamba ngamazwane akhe, ebuyela muva, engabeki ubunzima kuwo, ubunzima bomzimba wakhe bonke busengalweni zayo, lamandla obukhona bayo bubhoda en-gqondweni yakhe. Isithende sakhe singaphezulu kwesicathulo sayo, siselekela phansi, ingalo yakhe kweyayo ingalo.

Uyaqiniseka. Sewake waphila na phambilini kwesikhathi lesi soku-phuthuma lokuphelelwa lithemba? Kukhona na okunyenyezwayo kun-gakabi lokuzamazama komhlaba okulolaka olukhulu, lokulala, kungakabi lokuvuswa okwesabekayo okokufa? Impilo kayiphilwa kubuyelwa emuva na, okwesikhathi esifitshane, okomzuzwana woku-lahla ithemba lokuzisola?

Isihluku somzimba wayo lapho uhamba lowakhe, ulokuzimisela okukhulu. Iyamkhokhela, umzuzwana ngomzuzwana, isiya endaweni eyaziwa yiyo kuphela emicabangweni yayo. Ukukhala lokho kusuka ngqo engqondweni yakhe hatshi emlonyeni wakhe. Imusa ngaphi?

Iyakhothama. Khatshana laye. Idonsa isitulo emnyango wendlu, kungathi isilungele ingxoxo emnandi. UNonceba uzwa isitulo sitshaya umgubazi wezigodo, isivalo besesizunguzeka sitshaye umduli, siphenduke njalo sitshaye umgubazi lapho idonsa isitulo, butshapha. Um-

sindo wensimbi ebophele isivalo uzwakalela phansi, ungelamandla, eduze kwakhe. Umsindo uyafa njengento ephilayo.

UNonceba kayikhangeli. Ubuso bakhe buphendulwe bakhangela khatshana kwayo. Uthule, engelutho oluqakathekileyo, engelalutho oluligugu ngaphandle kwesikhathi. Kasilutho kuyo. Uyimpumela nje, eyenkanuko.

Uyayizwa, iphakathi komzimba wakhe. Iseduze. Iseduze njengolimi lwakhe, eduze njengokuba seduze kwengalo zakhe emzimbeni wakhe, njengoboya bakhe esikhumbeni sakhe, eduze njengokutshaya kwenhliziyo yakhe, ukuphefumula kwayo yikuphefumula kwakhe. Uyaphefumula, edonsela umoya phakathi. Amaginqo ayo asemakhaleni akhe. Ukuginqa kwayo.

Ukukhehlezele esikhwameni sayo, imali yamatshe, amakhiye, kuyini...

Uyawa, atshone emathangazini ayo, ahlangane lobukhuni balezi zinto, isiqunjana esifuqela phandle, ulutho olwenziwe ngensimbi, izinto zokusebenzisa angazaziyo azesabayo, imdonsela phansi kuyo, imbambe ezihlakaleni zakhe, isiyeyamise umzimba wakhe wonke kuyo, njengomuntu ehamba laye, ingalo yayo iyamphakamisa ingaphansi kwebele lakhe lenxele, ifithizela ebuthakathakeni bobunguye bakhe, ingono zakhe ziqinile, zilukhuni, zihlangana lenzipho zayo ezimadlewudlewu. Inggondo yakhe iyabila ngobukhona bengalo zayo.

Uyeseba na ukungikhangela, iyanyenyeza. Ithi khamfu isilevu sakhe engathi ingxenye yezitho zakhe ziyabhidlika, ziyawa, ziphephuka lomoya. Iyamphendula njalo isondeze ubuso bakhe, eduze, kobayo. Uhehele. Njengesibuko.

Iminwe yayo ivula indebe zakhe, isikhumba somile, ifumana ulimi lwakhe...iminwe yayo iphezu kolimi lwakhe...ingena emlonyeni wakhe...phezu kolimi lwakhe. Igoqa iminwe yayo iyihambise ngaphezulu kwezindebe zakhe.

Ukuphefumula kwakhe kudlula phakathi kweminwe yayo, amathe akhe akhudumalayo. Igobisa iminwe yayo iyihlohlele emkhandlweni okhudumalayo ongaphansi kolimi lwakhe. UNonceba uyayinambitha.

Ilisawudo elonyisiweyo, umbiliso - igazi elonyisiweyo elifileyo. Ibutha ubunguye bakhe, amathe akhe ngamanzi angagezisa isilonda.

Ulichatha nje kuphela engqondweni yayo. Ulutho olunganyamalala nje.

Ibeka izandla zakhe entanyeni yayo engathi ungumntwana engamphakamisa ngomusa. Iyanyakaza isiya emuva iye phambili. Iyephambili, iye emuva. Isidinga ingaphakathi yamathangazi akhe, isikhumba sakhe esinsundu, ngamandla, phezu kwamadolo. Ibamba ithambo lakhe elinsundu.

Ngibamba. Ngithinta lapha. Khangela kimi. Ngithe ngithinta lapha.

Uwisa izandla zakhe zisuka entanyeni yayo. Idolo layo lenxele lihamba lisiya emuva lisiya phambili ngaphansi kwamathangazi akhe. Yehlukanisa amadolo ayo. Yehlukanisa amadolo akhe.

Imbeka esikhathini esafayo njalo esadlulayo.

Khonokho masinyane nje, idabula umkhono esigqokweni sakhe njalo uwela endololwaneni yakhe ulenge ngendlela engelancedo, intambo ezimhlophe zilenga ehlombe lakhe njalo ziwela phakathi kwendololwane yakhe.

Iyamelela, ngesineke njengesikhathi sonke somnyaka, njengomuntu ongalaleliyo, njengesela. Iyenelisa ukubona isimo sokungakholwa kwakhe. Usengowayo njengomkhumbulo. Iluhlobo lolo oluba ngumnikazi wezinto ezingabambekiyo; ukuwumana, iminuko yamakha, lokufa. Ngakho, loba ephefumulela phansi, ikwenza ngokuthula ekwenza okwayo, ngethemba esilitshabalalisile. Itshaya umthetho. Angeke alinge ukuyiphikisa.

Iyenelisa ukubona ngale kwakhe isiyafika kulesiyana isihlahla esingelamahlamvu. Uhlezi engathi yinto engaphiliyo, into yamaphupho ayo nje. Uyaphefumula, esesaba ukunyikinyeka, ukuhambisa umhlane wakhe eweyamise engalweni zayo, esesaba ukuyekethisa amahlombe akhe, esesaba. Uthule. Ulokukhathazeka okukhulu.

Imbamba engathi ungumntwana olimeleyo. UNonceba uphosa ayikholwe, akholwe kuyo, uphosa ayisuse kanye lokulolozela kwayo lapha akhona, uphosa akwenze. Imupha amazwi angelapha. Ivala

amehlo ayo njalo ihambise indebe zayo phezu kwentamo yakhe. Amazwi ayo agcwala endlebeni zakhe, angene phakathi kwemibala yakhe lapho igazi lakhe eliwela khona njengamanzi atshisayo. Uyalizwa. Ingamelapha, imvikele ngomzimba wayo. Ingakwenza nje. Imibala yakhe iyalenga, ikhamisile, phakathi kwemilenze yayo eyehlukanisiweyo. Sekunjalo imlenze yayo iyavaleka njalo imbambe ithi nko.

Laphaya. Elayo. Ukunyenyeza kwayo phezu kwentamo yakhe, umoya otshisayo. Amazwi ayo ahamba kancane phezu kwakhe. Ise-
duze kakhulu okokuthi uvula amehlo akhe njalo ehlule umnyama otshisa ngaphansi kwabo. Usudukela ekukhanyeni. Uyandenda kungekho lapha aqonda khona. Uyekela inkophe zamehlo ziwe. Kuba lomnyama. Ukukhanya kuhlaba ngamandla. Kuyahlaba kungena.

Kwelinye icele lomnyango, lapha umduli ogoba khona unyamalale, ubona udadewabo uThenjiwe. Uyingxenye yakhe. Bamunye. UThenjiwe, uwile, amabele ahlaba phansi, inyawo zingelalutho, amehlo kawasaboni, ingalo zigotshisiwe zagoqwa, imibala yeluliwe, umzimba oncengayo, wome qha, akanyikinyeki.

Ngiyesaba ukuvala amehlo. Ngiyazesaba mina ngokwami. Ngingumnyama.

Yindoda nje engamangalisiyo, egqoke iyembe eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka elezikopela ezingamhlophe, njalo ezingamnyama. Ziyimpunga. Imikhono mifitshane. Ibhulugwe liyikhakhi. Yizigqoko zokuzivikela. Iyembe ongayithemba elezikopela ongazithemba. Amehlo akhe athe nhlo kuyo, ubona amachatha aluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka asasele eyembeni yayo lapha lalaphaya, omile, yonke enye ingxenye imanzi te, inamathele emzimbeni wayo njengesikhumba. Lapha kulesichibi selembu esifana lesibhakabhaka. Ingxenye yamabeheqe entamo igoqwe yangena phakathi. Isikhumba sayo sidonseke nko, siyacazimula. Ibhulugwe layo livuthuzekile ngaphansi. Inyawo zinkulu. Izicathulo. Intambo zezicathulo ziqatha. Ingaphansi yazo layo iqatha.

Iqinisile, ifuna ukubanjwa nguye, iyakuswela lokho. Ngizaphila, uyacabanga.

Iminwe yakho iyakhudumala. Ngithinta ngalezi izandla ezibutshenzezi. Sana ingalo yakho ngapha.

Iphakamisa imibala yakhe iyisusa phansi njalo imbeke anqume phezu kwamadolo ayo womabili, njengomlobokazi. Iqondisa isithupha sakhe emhlathini wayo, uyadikiza.\

Lusuku nje olufana lezinye insuku. Ukutshisa nje kuphela. Phezulu, kulomsindo wempiko, zinyoni: azila sisindo. Khatshana le kukhonkothainja, ithule, ikhonkothe njalo. Ikhalela phansi, umsindo ohelezayo ingathi yikukhwehlela. Ngosuku olunje izinja zazithole amazwi amatsha. Impukane zivele zisenza iphansi lonke libe mnyama. Igazi phansi. Ukufa.

Amavinqo ehla lentamo yayo eqatha avalwe ngamaginqo. Khathesi sokumele afake iminwe yakhe kweyayo. Uvele usephunyuka ngesikhathi izandla zayo zilanda ezakhe. Iminwe yabo iyathintana njen- gokubingelelana. Bayathintana babambane. Iyabobotheka, kodwa ayibobothekeli yena, ekufunayo yikuthintwa. Ilanga liyatshisa. Impukane ezilapha zenza ilanga libemnyama.

Ngiyaphila, phezu kwaleli dolo. Ngimelele. Ngiyaphila.

Ubona ibhakede eliyisiliva lisiza livela esibhakabhakeni esiluhlaza, lithwelwe ngaphezulu kwekhanda, isandla sikadadewabo silibambile ngakwelinye icele njalo iminwe yakhe igokele umphetho walo ocima ngamanzi, sekunjalo isandla siyayekela ibhakede lize, kancane, kancane kulobo buhlaza esibhakabhaka obucaphulayo. Khathesi usesenelisa ukubona ibhakede ligenquka, ligcwele amanzi, amathonsi amancinyazana esenza angathi ngumfafazo, echitheka, sekunjalo ibhakede lichithele wonke amanzi phansi; amanzi ahlephuke abe yizicucu njengelitshe.

Ukuthula okulandelayo kuyamangalisa, kuthule, njengokuphefumula. Uyagijima esedlula amanzi asenyamalele, khathesi sekulichitshana lobumanzi lodaka. Ibhakede lisesibhakabhakeni, ingqondo kaNonceba iyaxega njengesiswebhu. UNonceba uyahlehla, ubuyela emuva esuka emanzini achithekela phambi kwenyawo zakhe ezin- gagqokanga lutho, enyamalala engena engqondweni yakhe.

Thenjiwe...uyabiza. Kuthutsha indoda. Iyaphuthuma. Njengokhozi lusehla luhwitha.

Ikhanda layo lingemuva kukaThenjiwe, lapha okube kuloThenjiwe khona kuqala, lindenda emzimbeni wakhe, isemzimbeni wakhe. Iyandenda njengokuphazima kombane. Umzimba kaThenjiwe wala ulokhu umi uqondile ngasikhathi sinye ikhanda lale indoda lithutshe ngemuva kwelakhe, liphakathi kwalo, lithatha indawo yomzuzwana wakhe mune ngamune, lithatha indawo yakhe ebuhlazeni besibhakabhaka. Iginya ukuhamba kukaThenjiwe ikungenisa emzimbeni wayo, isibakhona lapha okube kuloThenjiwe khona, isiya kulezo ndawo akade ekhona. Sekunjalo uThenjiwe uyanyamalala kube yiyo esigxunyekwe endaweni yakhe, phambi kwamehlo kaNonceba, ngokuphangisa njalo kungelakuphambanisa njengesiphepho. Umzuzu ngowayo. Kungeke kwaguqulwa. Ngowayo.

Kwenzeke njani ukuthi indoda isike ikhanda lowesifazana ngesikhathi ibhakede lithwelwe ekhanda? Kwenzeke njani ukuthi indoda ibenge umphimbo wowsifazana njalo asinde?

Sekunjalo ibamba isidumbu isiphakamisele phezulu, indoda le engaziwayo, igagadlele ukufa okuqunywe ikhanda njengomchilo wamakhosikazi. Ibamba uThenjiwe imphakamisele phezulu. Sekunjalo sekukhanya angathi isibambe umzimba kaNonceba lawo yawuphakamisela phezulu ngoba kakuseneliseki ukuthi aqhubeke emi, ukuthi ingqondo yakhe isinde izimele yodwa. Ibamba imizimba yabo bobabili iyiphakamisele phezulu. Isingungqwaqwane.

Yehlela ngaphansi kwesidumbu engathi ingena esifuleni esithuleyo. Igazi likaThenjiwe ligeleza lisuka emzimbeni wakhe lifike ligoqane kuyo njengesiswebhu, lidikiza.

Isebenzise sikhali bani ukuquma ikhanda lakhe kanjalo, khathesi ikhanda selilenga phezu kwamabele kaThenjiwe, selehlukani siwe. Ibhakede, amanzi, ilizwi lakhe ligijima phandle egumeni, ligijima esifuleni samanzi acengekileyo litshelela lisiyaphambili lisuka kulokhuya kufa okungazwisisekiyo. UNonceba uthe njo amehlo phezulu, kule siya isibhakabhaka esiluhlaza, ngasikhathi sinye umzimba wakhe

uwohlokela phansi ngokuzithandela, usemukela ubuhlungu obubulalayo njengamanzi emhlabathini, umzimba wakhe uwa ngendlela efana lokunyamalala komsindo, ngendlela ohamba ngayo usiyakhatshana ungasusi matshe ngendlela amanzi enza ngayo, ungaphazamisi ngitsho yiloba yini into engelabunzima, ngitsho losiba olulula okwedlulisileyo, ungaguquli ukuma kwenkanyezi. Umsindo usuka uhambe ungabonakali, njengeveyili edabukileyo iphakama, ibingelela umoya, njengesilika etshayo.

Inyawo zakhe ziphansi emhlabathini.

Amanzi la abomvu, aludaka. Amazwane ami ayabambana, emunya iphansi. Ngimi ngithulisile kuleli chibi lamanzi amazwane ami ebambene ndawonye njalo udaka lubomvu, olubomvu udaka, udaka oluhlangene legazi.

Isebenziseni ukuquma ikhanda likaThenjiwe, okungakhanyayo kangaka, okwenzakala ngokuphangisa okungaka?

UNonceba umi enganyikinyeki, kungalindelekanga umzimba wakhe ufuqekela phambili. Sekumele adonsele emuva, adonse inyawo zakhe ezisusa edakeni olubomvu atshedele emuva amanyathelo amalutshwane. Inyathelo eliludaka olubomvu emuva.

Amanyathelo amalutshwane nje azizwe engasekho engozini ngalowo mzuzwana, inyawo zakhe zitshelela. Umkhumbulo uyasabalala; kubomvu, udaka, ufile.

Kulokhuyana kuphangisa, okomzuzwana nje kungakenzakali lokho, uNonceba ubona isandla sokudla sidonsela emuva njalo sihluthuna umzimba ngokhalo, ukuhamba okusamgido okulungiselelwe kuhle kakhulu okusobala ukuthi kakusinto entsha kulowo okwenzayo. Kasikho kufa kwakuqala esikubambe ezandleni zayo, ikugagadlele, njengenyoni iphunyuka. Kasikho kufa kwakuqala eyenze ukuthi kwenzakale. Isidumbu siwela phambili njalo iyakhubeka idonsele isidumbu emuva, kuba lokukhanya okwethambo okumhlophe okusuka esidunjini, ithambo lentamo linjalo, njengensaba zokukhanya ithambo liyanyamalala esifuleni segazi elimpompoza liphuma, amadolo agob-

ela phambili njalo umzimba uyabhoda ugxile ngezithende, imbala indawonye, uhuduleka ngecele - inqagala ebuthakathaka ibanjwe yasiwa phansi. Iphendula isidumbu isisa esandleni sayo senxele, ikwenza kubelula, ukufa, sekwedlule, inqagala ebanjwe kuhle njalo ifile, iphansi.

Ihudulela isidumbu emuva, ngezithende zaso. Isidumbu siyabhidlika. Ihlombe layo liphezulu, izimisele, imibala indawonye njalo iguqele phambili, idonsela ingalo emuva njalo ithwele ubunzima baso. Kuthe cwaka. UNonceba kaphefumuli. Isidumbu ngesayo, ukudikiza lokuhamba. Idonsela ingalo emuva, ingalo kuphela, njalo lokhu kuletha isifuba phambili, amabele phandle, efuqa igazi eselinjengelembu elilula elekthothi. Igazi lenza amavinqo phezu kwamabele.

Ima okwesikhathi eside ikulesi simo ingantshintshi ingalo njalo imise isidumbu singakabhidliki, isilengise sisuka ehlombe layo lenxele. Thenjiwe...uNonceba uyabiza...Thenjiwe...

Iyabamba futhi. Ibamba iqinise engathi le ingxenye yomdlalo ifuna isibindi, lokwenziwa kuhle ngobuciko, le ingxenye lapho ingqondo yayo egida lesidumbu. Sekunjalo iyaguqula umcabango wayo njalo ikhangele ngale kwamahlombe ayo, ngale kwesidumbu. Ikhangele yonke indawo. Ayisahlalisekanga, iyaphenduka, iphakama lesidumbu, iyaphenduka ibhoda futhi, kabili, ibe isisima. Isimfulathele.

Engemuva kwayo uyanelisa ukubona ingalo yakhe engembeswanga lutho, sekungathi udadewabo udiniwe nje ngemva kokusebenza nzima, ingalo ezilengelayo nje. Ubona ingalo ezingezikadadewabo. UNonceba ufisa ukuthi ngabe uyaphapha njengenkozi. Ukuphapha komcabango. Kulokungazwanani kuphela; okuthuleyo njengelitshe.

Udaka, ufile, selomile, lubomvu. Ubiza uThenjiwe futhi. Ufile.

Ithwala isidumbu sichayekile emhlane wayo, ingalo phezu kwehlombe linye ngalinye, ukuhamba kwayo kulamandla, igcwele igazi. Inyathela isiya eceleni, iye emuva, iyephambili leceleni. Emhlane wayo, isidumbu sibandezela phansi emgogodleni wayo. Iyaphenduka kuhlekuhle, ngokuhamba komzingeli obulalayo hatshi ngoba elambile kodwa ngoba isisu sakhe sigcwele, ngakho-ke, angenelisa

ukuzingela ngobugabazi. Iyema. Itshiya isidumbu khonapho ebe imi khona, kayisasinakekeli isidumbu, endaweni yalokho isisusa umthwalo lo ehlombe layo, iwulahlela le njengomcabango osumdala. Isidumbu asisesayo. Sesingesakhe.

Sekunjalo ihamba ngamandla isiya kuNonceba. Imphosela kuyo.

Ngiyaphila, ngilindele ngiphezu kwedolo lalo umuntu ongaziwayo.

UNonceba uhambisa iminwe yakhe yenxele esehla lengalo yayo njen-
genina eliyisiphofu lidinga indoda elake lahlangana layo ephutsheni:
leyo eyamhlaselayo; eyaphatha ilangabi yalisa emehlweni alo yaletsha
kulo ubuphofu. Inyama iyavuvuka njalo ibe ngamavinqovinqo esehla
lale ingalo eseduze kwakhe kakhulu, iminwe yakhe iyaqhubeka isehla
isiyaphansi. Lapha isikhumba sesisiba madlekedleke. Simnyama.
Imithambo ivuvukile. Yenza amavinqovinqo, ngaphansi kwe-
sikhumba. Isihlakala. Inzipho ziyizicecedu engathi bezibandezelwe
ngaphansi kwelitshe okwesikhathi eside kakhulu. Iminwe, itsbile. Lesi
yiso kuphela isenzo sakhe sokuba lesibindi; ukwenelisa ukuqamba in-
galo zayo.

Sekunjalo imdonsela phansi, isenza angathi ilinganisa ubunzima
bomcabango wakhe esandleni sayo. Iminwe yayo ilanda eyakhe.
Angeke ayivika. Ingaphakathi yesandla elukhuni okwamagama
iphakathi kweyakhe ingaphakathi yesandla. Isikhumba esiphakathi
kwengaphakathi yesandla sayo, silemifolo. Ukhangela phansi
enyaweni zakhe, edakeni olubomvu. Igazi liyoma masinyane, libe
lemikenke.

Okunye lokunye ukuthintwa kwenza kulindelwe udlakela avele es-
elwazi.

Inwele zayo, ngamaluba emangcwabeni. Lokho yikho okwatshiwo
nguThenjiwe mayelana lenwele ezinje, ezimhlophe lezimnyama zix-

ubene ndawonye, zithandelene. Inwele ezimnyama, ubutsha, ubuhlophe obuthakazelela ukufa. Ikhanda lilendlela yokubuthethelela amaluba alo, eyokubuthethelela isikhathi sibe yilixha lamaluba, uThenjiwe utshonjalo. Yena owayekwazi ukubuthethelela indimi lenhlakanipho emlonyeni munye. Ube engathini esikhathini esinje? Ube engaba ngubani? Lokho kwakungasiqiniso ngesikhathi esihamba singaphumuli sisiyaphambili, sisikhokhelela engcwabeni. Isikhathi sima mpo, njengakathesi.

Amaluba asemangcwabeni kawaqhakazi. Kakho owathelelayo. Amaluba eganga alenhliziyi eqinileyo ayaqhakaza yiloba yisiphi isikhathi somnyaka. Ukuba leqiniso nje ukuthi iluba liphila okwesikhathi eside ukwedlula umhlanyeli walo, kumele kube ngumhlobo oqhakaza ngamandla ngesikhathi sesomiso, liwisa amaluba alo njen- gesikhumba esidala. Ukwazi iluba elinje kudingeka ukuthi ube sewake wangcwaba isithandwa kumbe umntwana. Kwakukhangelelwe ukuthi bahleke lapha uThenjiwe ekhuluma lokho, ukwemukela lokho okungeke kwenqatshelwa, okuyikucina kwakho konke ukuqalisa, ukufa kwezihlakaniphi esezabona ilanga litshona njalo liphuma ka- nengi nengi okokuthi intuthu yelangabi lalo seyaphendula inwele zabo zabamhlophe. Labo asebesazi imizwa enje lezifiso okokuthi lokhu lakho kwatshisa ingxenye yemikhumbulo yabo. Labo asebazi ukuh- leka njalo benza inhambo benganakile bengena emicabangweni, ekuh- lamukeni, njalo bagida lezithunzi zabo emini. Labo abangasanaki kangako ngokuthembeka, abazi ngokupheleleyo ukuthi inkano ikina inyamalala isoma qha, njalo igoqane ngendlela ehlekisayo njengehlamvu: iyoma qha. Abantu abalemibono enjalo abahleka ukufa bemukele ukulala njengesipho esingelamsebenzi njalo bavuke engathi bavuswa ngumsindo wamabhera. Labo abasiphuna okulunwedlwana njengempande, besazi kakuhle umsindo wenyawo zabo zihamba kan- cane njengokuwumana ziqonda engcwabeni. Labo asebabona amaluba ekhithika ezihlahleni, asebabona inhlanzi zizalana emifuleni labant- wana bamaxoxo belahla imisila yabo. Babelenwele ezinje.

Nansi indoda eyayilenwele ezinjalo.

Ikhumbula ngamanxeba eyawathola ingakafi, ukuhlanyukelwa impi ingakabi khona, ngemva kwempi, langesikhathi sempi. Yena. USibaso. Icabanga ngowesifazana osengalweni zayo.

Ibona izithende zakhe ezigidayo, izandla zakhe ezimsulwa ithambo elifileyo, zicake okwenza zikhanye ngale kwazo, ziconjwe elitsheni. Intamo yakhe yeyeme emtshokweni ophakanyisiweyo, ingqondo yakhe ibhotshozwe lilanga. Linina elisuka khatshana, esikhathini esadlula kudala, ezimbalwini ezinqunu ezisentabeni zeGulati. Kayisilo lalapha. Uthwele isibani esikhanya sisodwa, esilomumo womkhumbulo oconjiweyo.

Iphosela isidumbu phansi: okwedlulayo osekwafayo.

UNonceba uyawa. Ubhodisa ikhanda lakhe khatshana kwayo. Uwela phezu kwengalo zakhe, izandla zakhe zivalelwe phakathi kwamabele akhe. Uyikhangela ekwelinye icele lomzimba wakhe, ubona izicathulo zayo kuphela. Uyakhasa aye khatshana, ngesisu, khatshana le. Sekunjalo usevukile. Isimphakamise imvusa phansi.

Ibamba ubuso bakhe ibusondeze eduze lobayo. Amehlo ayo acwayiza emedlula njengensaba zokukhanya. Isikhathi leso sifitshane, siphangisa njengombane, isikhathi esiphambi kwesikhathi engakanelisi ukuyibuza ngesenzo sayo sokuphangisa kakhulu kangaka, kumbe ukwenza, kumbe ukuhamba, kumbe ukucabanga, kumbe ukumangala ukuthi kuyini, ingaphi, kuyini, kungakenzakali konke lokho. Kancane kancane, inyathelo ebuyela muva, isithende sakhe sithwelwe ekucineni kwesicathulo sayo, hatshi lokho, imizwa nje yokuthintwa yikho konke akuzwayo, kungaqhubeki kokuphela: ngaphandle kobuhlungu obungapheliyo obuza muva. Ucabanga ukuthi yilokho nje, ukumthinta kwayo esilevini, kodwa endaweni yalokho, kubukhali njengensingo.

Kwakukhanya angathi yayingithinte okwesikhatshana kuphela ngenhlanekela yayo, mbijana nje, njalo yahambisa indololwane yayo yesokudla eduze kwehlombe lami lenxele, yayiphakamisela phezulu, kwakubonakala angathi kunjalo ngaleso sikhathi. Angizange ngiwise inkophe zami, ngiphakamise ingalo yami, ngiklabalale, loba ukusuka

lapho. Ukwenza kwayo kwakulula nje. Kwakubuthakathaka njalo kuphosa kulolozele kodwa angizange ngazi ukuthi kwakungasekuthinta kwayo okwakudweba isilevu sami, kungasikuthinta nje kodwa endebeni yami yangaphansi, kwakusedlula lokho. Okwesikhatshana konke lokhu kwakungabuhlungu. Angizwanga lutho. Yadinga ubuso bami. Yabuthinta ngesihluku esikhulu. Yasika kuhle yasusela khatshana. Yayisifunde ngekhandla izitho zami. Ukuma kwazo lalapha okugoba khona; indebe ezingakhulunywayo.

Ivala isandla sakhe. Isihlakala sakhe siyagoba, imithambo iyaqumba. UNonceba uyabubula ngendlala ebanjwe phakathi kwelitshe lesibhakabhaka. Ingqondo yakhe kayisasebenzi. Uyaqhuqha, njengentuthu isiyaphezulu.

Eseyedwa, ngemva kwesikhathi, uphendula isidumbu sikaThenjiwe, adonse ibhulawuzi eyehlisa ukuthi ivale ibele elimanzi. Kaselamazwi. Uhloma iminwe yakhe ngaphansi kwelembu elibomvu. Uzwakala ekhudumala njalo ekhalela impilo, yikutshisa lokhu okulokhu kusasalele enyameni, lokhu okuyikucina. Kaselamazwi.

ISAHLUKO SESIKHOMBISA

IBIZO LAYO NGUSIBASO, ilitshe lokuphamba umlilo. Yiyo. USibaso. Ngiyayilandela ngiseduze kwayo. Impilo yami yeyeme kukho. Ngilandela ukuma komzimba wayo. Ngilandela ingalo zayo. Isibulele uThenjiwe. Iphakathi kwakho lokho kufa.

Ngiyalalela, ngingelaqiniso laloba yiwaphi amazwi ayo, ekutshoyo, ekuswelayo, ethi ngokwayo, ekuxolelayo, ekuqinisayo, kodwa ukuqansa kwelizwi layo kungatsho ingqe yini, njalo ukuthula, kuba yikuqinisa kokufa.

Kulomunye umuntu lapha na ngaphandle kwakho? Ngubani omunye ohlala lapha? Ukhona omkhangeleleyo na? Ulomunye umuntu na?

Inyenyezela endlebeni yami engathi kulomunye ozakuzwa imfihlo yayo ejulileyo abe eseyiveza ekuzifihleni kwayo.

Angingeke ngilinge ukunyakaza. Ilele na? Ingabe iphatheke ngezinto zayo ezadlulayo? Iyakwazi ukulala phakathi kwaloba yiwuphi umumo okhona, phakathi kwezehlakalo ezitshiyeneyo. Iyenelisa ukulimaza kalula nje njengoba ilakho njalo ukukuhoxisa. Isiphilele ukuze ilandise imibono eminengi engavunyelwayo ngempi, ukuze idale kutsha impi. Nansi ilapha. Yona.

Inyawo zesayobe, iyaphikelela. Ekuyesabeni kwami ngihawukela lo umhlobo opheleleyo weqiniso ozwakala njengamanga abunjwe ngobuciko. Ngesikhathi ivale amehlo ngizwa engathi ngiyagalula, njalo ngibona imihlambi yezinyawo zesayobe zisabalala emnyameni. Lokho

ngokunye okungazwisisekiyo mayelana lezayobe, ukwenelisa kwazo ukuhamba phezu kwamanzi kodwa abantu begalula, itshonjalo.

USibaso wayedle izinyawo zesayobe ezimbalwa phakathi kwaso sonke isikhathi semp. Wayekwazi lapho izayobe ezazisiyakhona ukuze zife. Wayezazi imbalu lapha ezifela khona. Lokhu akusimfihlo enkulu engaziwa ngumuntu na, uyabuza. Kulokungazi okuthelela usizi, okungazi olunye ulutho ngaphandle kokufa, okungaphili ngolunye ulutho ngaphandle kokufa.

Igama lami nguSibaso. Sengachapha imifula eminengi igama lelo lingasekho ezindebeni zami, selikhohlakele. Ngumsebenzi olula ukukhohlwa igama. Amanye amagama ayathathwa, ubelalo okwesikhatshana njengosizi; empini ulahla amagama njengalokho okwenzayo ekulahlani izinto eziveza lokho owawuyikho khona kudala, njengezifinyo zidabukile, uwatshiye ngemuva njengezifula ezithela kwesikhulu zomile. Ngesikhathi semp singabantu abangelampilo. Siyizithunywa, impilo zethu ngamabanga okulahla ithemba, enye ingxenye yakho iyazifihla, ukwenzela ukuthi kungabhidliza yonke into, kube yingxenye kuphela. Okunye konke kuyabhidlika njengeyezi.

Uzibuse, owenzakale eminyakeni emithathu kuphela eyedluleyo, usitshengise ukuthi siyizidalwa ezingaqinanga, izwekazi eselinqotshwe ngomoya wodlakela, ilizwe elilomhlabathi kodwa lingelandawo yokuhlala. Singaphandle komngcele endaweni yethu.

Ngesikhathi semp kungcono ukweboleka igama, ukuze uphe amandla embalini. Kuyadingeka ukupha okujongiweyo kuleso sikhathi, ngomzuzwana munye ngamunye, ukupha inkuthazo. Impilo kumele iphilwe, lanxa ungayikholwa. Indoda kumele ikhule ibonakala njengesihlahla, kungelalutho olwehlukana ukukhala kwayo lezinto ezihluphayo. Endaweni yalokho, yimpi, njalo indoda isuka ibe ngeyenza izinto icatshile, sonke isikhathi ihlala isemakhulusini acatshileyo angazwisisekiyo, njalo ilandele wonke amazombe zombe akhona, uhambo lwayo lonke isiya endaweni eziyingozi. Izifika isisemathunzini amnyama, indawo ezingabanekwanga, zimnyama njalo

zisesabeka. Ilithunzi lapha ihamba; ilithunzi lalapha ilala. Ingqondo yayo imbobombobo njengombule odabukileyo njalo isehlakalo sinye ngasinye sedlula kuyo siphume ngale njengelitshe. Lapha isukuma ikhanda layo litshayana lolutho olunzima - ithola ukuthi imbali kulalapha ecina khona. Iyamangala. Sekumele iqaphe, njalo umzimba wayo masinya nje uhle uzilungisele ukuzivikela; isilesifiso sokuhlasela. Uma isitha singacatsha, idala esinye. Lokhu yikuzihlanza kwayo. Isiphose yahlanzeka. Ikhanya ilesifiso, umcabango ongafezwa yiyo kuphela. Kusobala phela, umcabango lo uphathelene lodlakela, ukuhlukuluzwa komusa. Yisimo somuntu ngokwakhe yedwa njalo esimotshayo. Ingeke yaphunyuka. Imele isikhathi ngokwaso.

Kulomhlobo wesayobe esiba ngumoya, impilo yaso ngeyesikhatshana esinganganani. Siyanyamalala, kusukela ngaphandle kusiyaphakathi, inyawo zaso sezaqina nko engathi zonyiswa, into yesikhathi esizayo. Kulomhlobo wesayobe oqoqa ndawonye zonke izihlobo zaso kungakabi lokuzamazama komhlaba, sithumela imibiko yaso ngomoya. Sezindawonye, izayobe zibuthana engosini yesikhathi, ichibi elitsheni elikhumuzekayo, igodi lapha umhlabathi okhukhulwe khona lizulu; kungakabi lokuzamazama komhlaba, isitha singakasondeli, njalo lempi ingakabikhona. Izayobe ziyelekana zize zibe yisiduli, zizidalela indlela yokuzibulalisa zona ngokwazo, zidinga enye indlela yokuphunyuka. Sekunjalo-ke ingaphezulu yesiduli sezayobe igcikwa ngamathe, aqatha njalo elukiwe kungathi lilembu elisambule, likhanya ngenxa yensaba zelanga, njalo lemichilo yamakhosikazi egobileyo ngaphezulu njengemikhumbulo. Kuyathula cwaka, kungakabi lokuza-mazama komhlaba, kungakabi lempi. Kuba lokuthulisela kunganyikinyeki lutho ngendlela engakaze ibonwe ngaphambili, njalo kuba lomumo omutsha womkhathi kulowo moya ovaletweyo. Uphenduka, kokuphela kokuphela kuze kube lolunye ulutho olukhululweyo, njengomusa. Isayobe siyawa kungathi yilutho olulengisiweyo oluzunguzeka luyele lale. Lokhu akusikho kucatshela ukufa: imizimba iyabaleka, ikhululekile njengesikhathi. Umzimba uyanyamalala, kusuka ngaphakathi kusiyangaphandle, ingaphakathi ithululeka njen-

gothuli oluyimpuphu, inyawo seziyizinto ezonyiswa kudala. Lokhu yikuphela kokudalwa kwezinto, ukuqala kwempi.

Sengagola inyawo ezimbalwa zezayobe ngesikhathi zona zinxibene njengezithembiso, zingenzima, zizinaliti ezingalimaziyo. Isithunzi sesikhathi; insalela yempilo. Ngiphephetha insalela yempilo esandleni sami njengento ezakwenzeka. Esandleni sami kulengoma emnyama, izimo ezigoqanayo zitshilane zibe yimizidlana emincane, njengamazwi amancinyane ekhasini, kulogwadlwana olulotshwe ngesandla, le-inki eyachithekela elitsheni elidala. Ngihlikihla ingaphakathi yesandla sami ihlanzeke. Ilizwe lakithi liswela iqhawe elinje elithwele amafutha ezilonda zalo phakathi kwendebe zalo lolimi, phakathi kwe-sithupha lenkomba, phakathi komhlabathi lengaphansi yenyawo zalo, eliphapha liqonda eqinisweni elingelachatha.

Sengabona isayobe sigida lolonyovu. Umhlobo lo wesayobe ulenga ngaphansi kophahla olufulelwe nge-asibhesita kuyo yonke imizi emalokitshini. Amadoda amanengi ayabukela ukuhamba kwesayobe esinje. Wonke umuntu owasindayo uyahawukela isayobe sigida lolonyovu.

Kulomhlobo wesayobe oguqula umbala ngesikhathi sihlangana lesiduna ukuze zizale abantwana. Sidla esiduna leso sisigxobagxobe sibe yinhlama ecolekileyo. Ngenhlama leyo sesikhombisa ijaha elilandelayo. Silipha lokhu okulungisiweyo, umnikelo owenziwe ngobunono ukwenzela ukuthi sona sithole uthando olumnandi okwesikhatshana nje kodwa. Umhlobo lo wesayobe ulenga phakathi kwezihlahla njalo ungabonakala kuphela lapha kulonyezi. Isayobe esinje silemfihlo eqakatheke kakhulu, silolwazi lokuthi uthando lungeke lwakhelwa esihawini, kodwa ukuthi isihawu singakhelwa ethandweni. Sazi ubuhlungu obuqotho obemizwa yothando, ukuthi udlakela luyingxenye yomdlalo wamaqembu aphikisanayo, njalo lokuthi ngesikhathi sempa, kulemihlobo emibili yezithandani, omunye osesikhathini esadlulayo, njalo osewafayo, lomunye osesikhathini esizayo, ophilayo njalo ofiswa kakhulu. Okwezolo yikudla, okwakusasa kuthwele inhlanhla. Iqiniso lohlobo lolu ngolwamaphupho ezwekazi

eliphambene ingqondo.

Kulomhlobo wesayobe olemilenze emide kakhulu enciphe okwesabekayo, elungele ukunyamalala. Isayobe lesi siphosa sikhanye ngale kwaso, imilenze yaso zinsaba zokukhanya okugida emnyameni, okunjengemizila yepeniseli. Imilenze isenza sihlale siphakeme siphezulu khatshana lomhlabathi, njalo akulalutho olumangalisayo ngaso sibili, kuphonguphephuka nje, ngumzimba omhlotshana nje kuphela. Isipoko ngokwaso. Ngasibona sihamba siquma phezu kwe-sibuko ngenye ikuseni. Sekunjalo sema ukuhamba. Isibuko sakhanya singathi sicezukile. Ngangisenelisa ukubona ubuso bami obucezukileyo ngale ngemuva kwaso. Lesi yisayobe sangemva kwempi, isayobe esilambileyo. Singabhidlika yiloba nini njengolwembu olwembese amaphupho.

Lapha isayobe lesi sisedlula kukhanya angathi ungaphephetha imilenze yaso le engaqedakaliyo ngokunyenyeza nje kuphela. Okuhlangana khona amalunga emilenze kusachatha nje elibekwa lapho okucina khona umutsho, ungqi, yikufa ngokwakho. Ukubonakala kwaso yincazelo nje yombono omkhulu. Isayobe lesi usithola ngezikhathi zekuseni kakhulu, singaqedakali, sisehlela engosini, umzimba waso useluka njengentambo, ucazimula njengelembu lekhothoni, njengolunya. Asilanyamazana ezisidlayo. Siphila ngendlala. Ingqe ngubani ongasizingela kungamela ukuthi akhothe ukungabonakali kwaso akususe emhlabathini, njengesawudo elichithekileyo. Siyakwazi ukuphila sisemaphethelweni, imvava, njengencezu zengilazi. Ngubani ongathanda ukudla into enje evele isizifele? Ngesikhathi esizayo kakusoze kube ngitsho lomzidlana waso. Sifa singaphandle kwe-sikhathi.

Yebo. Ngilele. Ngizenza ofileyo, njengalokho engakwenzayo emahlathini aseGulati lapho isayobe esikhangeleka siyingozi sasihamba phezu kwengalo yami. Ngangisikhangela, ngibambe umphefumulo, ngithulise njengelitshe nginganyikinyeki. Kwakungelakuphambanisa ukwazi isayobe esibulalayo, bonke ubufakazi busegcekeni, imilenze eyesabekayo, amazinyo aloboya. Sa-

sithwele ubunzima obubulalayo, phezu kwengalo yakho. Ubunzima obuzithembileyo. Sasizihambela nje phezu kwengalo yakho yonke njengomgidi ohlanyayo. Ukubunjwa komzimba waso kanye lemibala yaso kubi kakhulu. Wawungasizwa sizama ukwenza isinqumo, sica-banga ukuthi kambe ungabe ungumuntu, njalo uma unguye ungabe sewafa kudala. Isayobe kasiqali ukudlalisa ubuthi baso. Wawungezwa isisu saso sihwaya isikhumba sakho. Silengile. Senza ukulimaza umd-lalo owenziwa ngobunono njalo sikulanda libalele. Sasilokuphangisa kwaso okwakukhanya angathi akusikwaleyo imihlobo. Umzimba omncane. Sakhiwe sabaside. Sizilingana ngendlela esolisayo. Uma sasithe sasuka sahamba ngokuphangisa sasikuphe ithuba lokuke uphile okwesikhathi. Isehlakalo leso sasiphica, ukufa kuseduze njalo kukhatshana. Balebizo lalesi isayobe, bathi ngumahambemoyeni. Ngangicabanga ukuthi ngangitshiye isayobe esinje egangeni lapha okulemithi lokwesabeka kwaso khona. Ukusinda yibuciko obufundwa ekuhambelaneni kwemvelo.

Iyanyenyeza. Ikhuluma okungazwakaliyo, isangene. Ingiphosela phansi ngodlakela, ngokuphangisa. Sekunjalo iyangiphakamisa futhi, ingilethe engalweni zayo. Ngizizwa ibandezekile emzimbeni wami, lokho kuphela, sekunjalo ngizwa ubuhlungu obungechazwe. Ingiphosela phansi njalo, ibe isinyamalala.

ISAHLUKO SESITSHIYAGALOMBILI

OWESIFAZANA UYAKLABALALA. Ilizwi lakhe lehla ligijime ngomkhandlo ophakathi kwendlu njengento enjengamanzi atshisayo. Ilizwi lakhe liphezulu. Kulokunye okuzwisa usizi okuphuma kuye, ulutho olungamisekiyo. Ilizwi lakhe liyavalwa, masinya seliban-dezelwe phansi. Abantu abanengi babandezele owesifazana phansi. Owesifazana ubhidliza umcabango osengqondweni yakhe. Ulahla ulutho. Ukukhanya lomsindo yikho kuphela okungagezisa ingqondo; hatshi ukuthintwa. Uhlanza ingqondo yakhe. Owesifazana unqolonga okungapheliyo, esehla lomkhandlo ophakathi kwendlu. Mude kangani umkhandlo ophakathi kwendlu? Kulesikhathi eside kangani owesifazana ekhala? Kulolutho olunyamalalayo. Usebhenyisiwe. Uyafa. Uthule. Hatshi, ilizwi lakhe lizwakala kakhulu. Uyaphila ekamelweni. Ilizwi lakhe lisengqondweni kaNonceba. Ilizwi limi khonapho eceleni kombheda wakhe. Khonapho.

Abantu ababili bahamba beschla ngomkhandlo ophakathi kwendlu. UNonceba kathandi ukulalela amazwi abo, ubambelele elizwini elidangeleyo, eselizwakalela khatshana khatthesi, elowesifazana oklabalalayo, ukhathazwa yingqondo yakhe efayo; kodwa umnyango ukhamisile, uyanelisa ukubona esedlula ngale kwamashitibhedi amhlophe awombheda wakhe wesibhedlela, ebona ukukhanya okukumkhandlo ophakathi kwendlu, njalo umsindo wezinyawo use-duze, usuzwakalela phansi. Ikhethe elibomvu livuliwe labotshelwa

ekucineni kwensimbi, iwindi livuleke kancane, njalo ngaphandle kwaleli windi elikhulu kulesixuku sehayibhisikasi esilamaluba. Singaphezu kwewindi ngakho uyenelisa ukusibona sonke. Ngemuva kwaso kulesitubhu esibanzi esakhiwe ngesamende. Sekusiba lalapho okungenwa khona. Uyalalela umsindo wenyawo zisiza emnyango wakhe. Umsindo wezinyawo zowesifazane. Ilizwi lendoda. Amazwi aletha imifanekiso elamandla engqondweni yakhe eyowesifazana oklabalalayo kwelinye ikamelo elilandelayo angakaliboni. Loba engakunanzeleli, uNonceba uselale lapha, kulo umbheda, okweviki, lelizwi limi khonapho eceleni kombheda wakhe. Khonapho.

UNonceba utshibilikisa umhlane wakhe. Utshona ngamandla embhedeni. Ufisa ukuphendula umqamelo wakhe. Uzwakala usukhudumala kakhulu, usungcolile, usumanzi. Kulomuntu obophele ingalo zakhe ensimbini zombheda. Angeke azihambise. Amabhanti aqatha abophe umzimba wakhe njalo ambandezela phansi. Uyenelisa ukuhambisa amehlo akhe. Ukhangela ngaphandle kwekamelo. Ukhangela ihayibhisikasi. Lilamaluba amakhulu. Kawathandi amaluba abomvu. 'Amaluba abomvu ngamaluba akhanya okuthe kla kakhulu. Kumele uwathande.' Kungani uThenjiwe esitshonjalo? Kungani esitshonjalo ekhanda lakhe? Yena ngokwakhe, uNonceba, kawathandi amaluba abomvu. Avala yonke indawo engqondweni. Kathandi ukuthi iluba lenze lokho, ukuthi liqhakaze ekhanda lakhe. Uthanda amaluba amhlophe lalithanga. Lapha uwahloma enweleni zakho kumbe uwaphethe ngezandla, akhangeleka njengamaluba, hatshi igazi.

Amazwi azwakala kumkhandlo ophakathi kwendlu aseseduze khathesi lomsindo wenyawo lawo useduze. Baxoxa mayelana lowesifazana ababandezele ilizwi lakhe phansi. Sekulesikhathi esinganani owesifazana esifa? Uselesikhathi esinganani engcwatshiwe elizwini lakhe yena ngokwakhe? Esifa, elizwini lakhe yena ngokwakhe. Ebandezelwe phansi.

'Ubulele umyeni wakhe. Amasotsha amabili angena endlini yakhe ahlalisa umyeni wakhe phezu kwelitshe. Aqhubela owesifazana

ihloka. Amadoda la ayekhombele imibhobho emadodaneni akhe amabili asemadala, esithi azawadubula uma engayekela ukulalela. Waguqa ngamadolo wawancenga ukuthi ayekele amadodana akhe ahambe. Elinye isotsha lamsunduzela khatshana, ngesidindi sombhobho walo. Wawela phansi wakhalela amadodana akhe engathi ayevele esefile, wakhalela lenhliziyo yesotsha elathi yayife lempi. Umyeni wakhe waphakamisa ilizwi eqondise kuye wathi...Ngibulala...Ngibulala. Wancenga. Wayesefisa kakhulu ukuthi afe ukuze asindise amadodana akhe amabili. Wasukuma, ethule ephinda okwasekutshiwo ngumyeni wakhe, ngendebe zakhe, ngezandla zakhe. Wavula amehlo waphakamisa ihloka ngaphezu kwamahlombe akhe waze wafa. Lokho yikho okwenzakala kuye. Amadoda lawo amtshiya ekuleso simo. Umyeni osefile lamadodana amabili aphilayo.'

Khathesi uNonceba usesenelisa ukubona owesifazana elehloka. Mude njalo ulomzimba omncane njalo inyawo zakhe kazifiki phansi. Umzimba wakhe ulenga emoyeni. Kungathi ulenga esihlahleni. 'Ulenga esihlahleni na?' Kungani uThenjiwe ebuza lokho? Kungani ebuza vele. Owesifazana uyisihlahla njalo zonke ingatsha ziphakathi kwekhanda lakhe, ziyahamba, zisiya emuva laphambili. Owesifazana ufuna ukugamula isihlahla siwele phansi, ngehloka. Ukuze agamule isihlahla siwele phansi, kumele amele khatshana, yikho umzimba wakhe unjalo, ukhatshana le. Umzimba wakhe uyahamba usuka esihlahleni. Ingalo zakhe zinde kakhulu zedlula umzimba wonke, owesifazana kenelisi ukuziphakamisa. Kenelisi ukuhamba. Uyazi mayelana lehloka elisemoyeni, liphezulu kakhulu kulekhanda lakhe, liphezulu kakhulu kalifikeli. Ihloka khathesi selisiwa lidabula phakathi kwezandla zowesifazana. UNonceba uhambisa izandla zakhe zisiyaphambili ukuze avikele owesifazana, ukuze asuse ihloka ezandleni zowesifazana. Ingalo zikaNonceba zibotshelwe embhedeni, ngakho kenelisi ukuhamba. Sekumele abukele nje njalo athule. Wenelisa kuphela ukubona. Akalalalizwi angalitsho. Akulalizwi. Kangeke akhulume. Akulalizwi angalitsho.

Owesifazana khathesi usemi echibini legazi. Ihloka selinyamalele.

Kasazami ukuphakamisa ingalo zakhe. Kaseyingxenye yakho. Kasey-ingxenye yakho ngitsho.

Ibhanditshi ibhodiswe ekhanda likaNonceba, yabhoda, yabhoda, yabhoda. Isandla sihamba phezu kwamehlo akhe. Isandla esilolunzelelo njalo esincinyane. 'Kubotshwe kwaqina okudlulisileyo lokhu na,' ilizwi litshonjalo. Kakusiwo mbuzo. Yinkulumo nje kuphela. Yikuthinta nje. UNonceba angenelisa ukuvuma ngekhanda kuphela. Uyalizwa ilembu libandezela phansi, umnuko wamafutha afakwe umuthi. Umlomo wakhe uvuleke kancane, ngaphansi kwelembu. Ulimi lwakhe luyahamba phakathi komlomo wakhe. Ulomhawu wamanzi, umphimbo wakhe uyatsha. Uhambisa ulimi lwakhe elubhodisa njalo nje, ludinga amathe. Ufuna ukufikela ibhanditshi ngolimi lwakhe. Ukuthi ayixegise. Ukuthi aphefumule ngomlomo wakhe, hatshi ngamakhala. Kasaboni kuhle, usesangene, usehlanya, ngenxa yomuthi. Ubona izinto ezimbili kuyo yonke into eyodwa. Ingxenye emnyama yesithunzi lengxenye ekhanyayo. Umhlaba wakhe usubekwe phezulu komunye. Lapha esizwa ilizwi lenina kumkhandlo ophakathi kwendlu, uzwa elakhe eceleni kwalo.

Uyedwa, khathesi, ekhangele phandle ngewindi. Yonke into isihambile. Usesegcekeni. Yonke into iyaguquka. Ulemizwa emkhathaza kakhulu ethi yonke into ivele isiguqukile, isihambile, ayiselakutholakala futhi. Akulalutho oluzaphinda lufane lakuqala. Ingalo zakhe seziguqukile; lomzimba wakhe. IKezi, indawo yakhe lapha azalwa khona, kayiseyiyo eyakhe. Ukhumbula iKezi, igonjolozelwe zintaba. Wathanda lonke uhetshezana lwenhlabathi yaleyo ndawo, abantu, iyamazana, lomhlabathi. Isibhakabhaka esingaphezu kwakhe khathesi sesitshiyene; isibhakabhaka kumele sithwale amaphupho. Izinto azikhumbulayo sezaguquka: kugoqela umhlobo lesilinganiso sobuhlungu, lesenjabulo. Wayevikelekile kungakafiki khathesi, wayevikelekile ngoba wayekhumbula izinto ezitshiyeneyo, ezikhumbula ngendlela etshiyeneyo, inhliziyi yakhe ingatshayi, ingagigi, ingamphandli. Kwakungelamuntu owayefele emehlweni akhe njalo lowo muntu wathatha umkhumbulo wakhe wawenza owakhe ngale

indlela; wayengaphathekanga kukho, ilizwi lakhe lalingakabizi abafileyo. Usendaweni embi kakhulu, umi ndawonye, ebandezelwe phansi. Kakhulumi. Uyilizwi elifayo. Elinganelisi ukubumba amazwi abelulimi olukhulunywayo, ukuthi aphefumule ekhululekile. Kuzamela adinge isisusa somsindo phakathi kwakhe, esingela chatha njalo esingabekelwanga sikhathi. Sekunjalo uzavula umlomo wakhe ayekele ilizwi likhululeke. Amazwi azathuluka. Sekunjalo kuphela kulapho angafumana khona umhlaba otshiyene lenkinga yakhe. Uzabuyisa kutsha ingqondo yakhe, eyelapha ngezigaba ngezigaba, ngomsindo.

Ucabanga ngolimi lwezinyamazana olungela mazwi kodwa umkhumbulo.

Ukuhamba kwemizimba yazo, umkhumbulo osemathanjeni azo, owezindawo esezafika kuzo. Lapha zithe zawela engozini, zisinda njani? Zivala amehlo azo ziphuphe na, kumbe ziphupha amehlo azo evulekile, khona zivele ziyaphupha nje na? Zizalwa kutsha emsindweni na? Ziyondla ukufa phakathi kwemizimba yazo njengesiphepho na, ulimi lwazo lungazwakali? Angathanda ukwazi ulimi lwazo zonke izidalwa ezilinyaziweyo, ziqalisela ngaphi lapha yonke into isicinile. Kulolimi na lapho okucina khona ingqondo, okucina ingqondo zonke? Unyikinyisa ikhanda lakhe elisa emaceleni, kancinyane, egcwalelana, esizwa ubuhlungu obungathwalekiyo obuzamkhulela masinyane nje, obube bulaye ngaso sonke isikhathi lapho evula amehlo akhe njalo esazi ukuthi ukhangele: uyaphila. Kungakenzakali lokhu, wayekwazi ukugcina umcabango engqondweni yakhe. Khathesi usebhuqiwe. Angeke esatsho ukuthi uyaphila, ukuthi usindile. Khathesi usesesaba ukususa amehlo akhe emalubeni abomvu angaphandle kwewindi, uyabonga ngobukhona bawo, ukubunjwa kwawo, lokuma kwawo, yinto eyokuthi ingqondo yakhe ibuke, igcine emkhumbulweni. Ayinto, ebonakala kuhle, eyenzelwe imizwa yakhe, elombala njalo engelamsindo. Kungcono ukubuka amaluba kulokuvumela ukuthi umcabango ubumbe, uhlale, njalo uzitholele indawo enhle engqondweni yakhe lapho into yonke esichithwe khona njengamanzi, yalahlwa, lapha isibhakabhaka esesiguquke khona kokuphela,

amabizo ezinto eselahlekile. Yonke into isiguqukile, njalo sekuguqule lendlela yokubona kwakhe, yokuhlala kwakhe emzimbeni wakhe, yokuba kwakhe ngophilayo. Sonke isikhathi babebabili, omunye ehamba eceleni komunye njengesithunzi, khathesi useyedwa, useyisithunzi sakhe ngokwakhe. Omunye usenyamalele ngesiphetho esize masinyane njalo ngokucina okumangalisayo.

Kulendoda eqhamuka ngemuva kwesixuku sehayibhisikasi. Yethula ingowane yayo lapha isifika esitubhini sesamende. Ingowane leyo igoqwa ezandleni zayo. Iyasithela, ngemuva kwesivalo, isicatshile emehlweni akhe. Isihambe yedlula umnyango, yangena esibhedlela. UNonceba uqhubeka ejolozele indawo leyo engelalutho okube kula leyo ndoda khona. Uyenelisa ukuyibona futhi engavalanga amehlo akhe, isandla sayo siya engowaneni yayo, iyayethula, iyigoqe ngesikhathi isedlula isixuku sehayibhisikasi. Uyayibona, iphahlwe ngamaluba abomvu. Wala ebona ubuso bayo bukuleyo ndawo, phakathi kwamaluba, ikhanda layo likhothame, ingalo ilanda ingowane, sekunjalo iphinde yehle. Ubona kuphela icele lobuso bayo obucakileyo bumi phakathi kwamaluba aqhakazileyo, buphahlwe ngamaluba abomvu. Igqoke ibhatshi elimnyama. Iyembe emhlophe. Isingena emnyango, ubona umhlane wayo, ikhanda layo lingela ngowane, ingasekho ezi-valweni, ingqondo yakhe ingasela mfanekiso wayo, kungasekho akucabangayo. Sekunjalo ubuyisela amehlo akhe emalubeni lapha engekho khona. Ngamaluba kuphela. Alamakhanda amakhulu. Umsindo wezinyawo uphazamisa umcabango wakhe, usanganise imifanekiso esengqondweni yakhe. Indoda iyanyamalala kungathi ngamagagasi, kungathi ingqondo yakhe yisiziba samanzi, olunye ulutho olunzima okwedlula yona seluwele phakathi lwenza umfanekiso wayo waba ngamagagasi. Umsindo wezinyawo usukhona futhi emkhandlweni ophakathi kwendlu. Ilizwi liseduze, liseduze okwedlula amaluba osekumele aphendukele kuwo. Kulomunye okhuluma laye khonaphayana, eceleni kombheda wakhe. Uyayibona. Ngubani indoda le emi eceleni kombheda? Ufisa ukuthi ngabe uyedwa. Uyayikhangelisisa. Isibeke ingowane yayo esihlalweni. Ithinta ibunzi

lakhe. Kayazi. Ubeyibukele ngewindi, njalo khathesi, isikhule ya-phuma engqondweni yakhe yaba kule indawo eduze kombheda wakhe, isikhuluma laye. Ngale indlela useyazi. Ihambe yangena ngomnyango, yedlula amaluba ahandle. Ilithunzi nje. Indoda ngaphandle kwewindi. Kayitsho ukuthi ingubani. Kalaleli indebe zayo, zivuleka, ikhuluma. Uyaphenduka akhangele le khatshana, ezama ngamandla wonke, efuna ukutsho ulutho oluzayixotshela khatshana. UNonceba uzunguza ikhanda lakhe elisa emaceleni. Ngesiphangiphangi. Uvala amehlo akhe ngci njalo azunguze ikhanda lakhe futhi. Ngamandla amakhulu. Iyamthinta. Akumelanga imthinte. Isandla sidonsela khatshana. Ukhangalisa ubuso bakhe endodeni ekhulumayo. Ufisa ukuthi ngabe uyedwa, ukwenzela ukuthi alale. Uzizwa ezondela indoda le engaziwayo ngokumenza azizwe engasento yalutho. Engelamazwi, angeke ayenze isuke. Useyisibotshwa sokuthula kwakhe. Kulesihlalo. Indoda ihlala ekamelweni ilanga lonke. Iguqula indawo yesihlalo sayo kokuphela. Uyenelisa ukuzwa ibhatshi layo lisenza imisinjwana ephansi, okwelembu ligudla phezu kwelinye ilembu, ilembu lamabhulugwe ayo lapha iphakamisa omunye umlenze iwubeka phezu komunye, njalo iguqula ukuma. Ngaphandle kwalokho akula olunye ulutho elutshoyo. Kayisondeli eduze kwakhe futhi. Iyam-linda, imi khatshana. Ubuka ihayibhisikasi imini yonke. Angasusa amehlo akhe kuhayibhisikasi, uzithela endodeni. Umsebenzi wayo, mhlawumbe, ngowokuhlala imlinde. UNonceba uvula amehlo akhe akhangelisise ihayibhisikasi ethule. Kazake azizwe elemizwa eqine kangaka mayelana lokuzonda kwakhe amaluba abomvu.

'Khangela!' Kutsho uThenjiwe. 'Sengikudobhele amaluba amahle ok-wamagama.' UThenjiwe usebuye lamaluba amhlophe evela lawo ekhunjini lomfula, ngamaluba amakhulu ayizigxingana ezelekane ka-bili njalo iluba elilodwa ligcwala isandla sakhe sonke. Yiloba kunini lapha uNonceba esiba lomfanekiso wamaluba, ubona la amaluba kuphela amhlophe njalo ayizigxingana ezelekane kabili akhula ekhunjini lomfula uKwakhe ngemva kokuna kwezulu lakuqala, ekupheleni

komnyaka. Uma izulu liphuzile njalo amaluba engekho kutsho ukuthi kakusumnyaka omuhle, uNonceba angakwenelisa kuphela yikuhlala nje akhumbule ngazo zonke izehlakalo ezibangele ukuthi amaluba la angaveli.

UThenjiwe ubeke amaluba amabili enkomitshini ayibeke engosini yekamelo. Eduze lewindi, ukwenzela ukuthi ukukhanya kufike kalula phezu kwawo. UNonceba kenelisi ukuzwisisa ukuthi kungani esizwa edanile uThenjiwe esanda kumupha amaluba amahle okwamagama. UThenjiwe uyakhala njalo lokhu lakho kakuzwisiseki. UThenjiwe ngumutu ongakhaliyo. Ngitsho lalapho uyise wabo esifa. UThenjiwe uthule zwi ngesikhathi bemngcwaba. UNonceba ulokhu ekuzwa ukutshisa kwelanga ebusweni bakhe ngoba bebemi elangeni okwesikhathi eside.

‘Inyembezi ngezokutshengisa injabulo,’ uThenjiwe utshonjalo. ‘Hathi ukudana.’ UNonceba uhamba angene ekamelweni, uzonde uyaphuphuma, uvala isivalo ngemva kokungena kwakhe. UThenjiwe angatsho njani izinto ezinje ngobaba wabo. Uyise osefile. Sekunjalo isivalo siyavuleka. UThenjiwe uyamlandela ekamelweni lokulala. Uhlala kwelinye icele elisekucineni kombheda, eliseduze lomnyango. Uyasukuma alungise ilembu elembese umbheda, eligoqagoqa kakuhle abe esehloma imigoqwa leyo ngaphansi kukamathilasi ekwenza ngobunono obukhulu, esenza angathi lolu lusuku olunjengemihla yonke nje, njalo amalembu avale umbheda vele kumele agoqwe kuhle. Uyise usengcwatshiwe. Kungani omunye phakathi kwabo engazihlupha ngamalembu avala umbheda, uNonceba uyazibuza. UThenjiwe uqeda akwenzayo abe esebuyela endaweni yakhe phezu kwelembu lokuvala umbheda elihlonywe kuhle ngaphansi kukamathilasi. Ingxenye yombheda eseleyo isekele umduli, phezu kwenye kuhlezi uNonceba, kusobala ukuthi kafuni kusuka. Ngaphansi kombheda kulengubo elemizila emhlophe lehlulaza okotshani.

‘Lapho ukudana okuqotho kungena enhliziyweni yakho Nonceba, kunjengocezu lwelanga. Umlilo utshisa yonke into. Umlilo utshisa amanzi. Ngilocezu lwelanga leli oluhlonywe emzimbeni wami lamh-

lanje,' utshonjalo uThenjiwe. Uyaphuma ekamelweni engaphindanga wakhuluma olunye ulutho futhi njalo uNonceba uqhubeka ehlezi, eabanga ngelanga phezulu le esibhakabhakeni amehlo akhe aze atshise, aphinde njalo, ehlengezela izinyembezi, kodwa kumele eme alalele uThenjiwe. Ubona ukukhanya kokusa kugcwala ekamelweni njalo uyazi ukuthi lokhu lilanga, ukukhanya lokhu okubutshelezi sekulethe ilanga phakathi ekamelweni. Uma engalandela usaba olulodwa olokukhanya uzafika elangeni. UNonceba uyakhothama aqalise ukulungisa ilembu elivala umbheda eliseceleni lakhe, elihloma ngaphansi kukamathilasi. Wenza lokhu kancane kancane okokuthi ingalo zakhe sezibuhlungu ngokuhanjiswa ngendlela ebuhlungu, ngoba ngumsebenzi omncane, kodwa akufisayo yikuchitha impilo yakhe yonke egoqa ebeka khatshana, ebeka ubuciko lobu engqondweni yakhe. Ehluza kühle ingqondo yakhe.

Ngolunye usuku ufuqwa asiwe kwelinye ikamelo elilemibheda ebekwe ilandelana. Kukwenye indawo lapha esibhedlela, likamelo lesibhedlela okulezigulane ezinengi khona. UNonceba uzizwa esesegcekeni, embuliwe. Sekumele amelane labanye abantu, bemkhangela, bebuka, bephendula imizimba yabo beqondise kuye, bemangala nje ngaye. Uzwa amazwi atshiyeneyo emgombolozele engakananzeleli ukuthi kakho ngitsho loyedwa okhangeleyo, lokhu yikububula kwalabo abalala bephakathi kobuhlungu, belezilonda okungelamuntu ongazelapha; izilonda zisezinhliziyweni zabo. Lezi yizilonda zempi okungelamuntu ongazelapha; amabhanditshi lemithungo kungeke kwabuyisela umuntu umkhumbulo wakhe ulokhu uhlangene unjalo uphelele uqotho phakathi kwethambo. Yisikhumba kuphela esipholayo. Ekuqaleni wethuswa yinguquko le njalo ufisa ukubuyela ekamelweni abegcinwe khona kuqala, eyedwa, lapho ayesanelisa khona ukukhangela phandle, ekuseni kwelanga, njalo alolozele ukuthula kwakhe. Ingalo zakhe sezikhululekile khathesi. Usengazihambisa uma efuna kodwa kakwenzi, uziyekela ziseduze komzimba wakhe. Usengavuka embhedeni wakhe. Usengahambahamba nje. Usengadinga isibuko. Kodwa-ke, uNonceba uyekela umz-

imba wakhe wonke uhlale usendaweni eyodwa. Uyesaba kakhulu ukuhambisa ingalo zakhe. Wonke umuntu okuleli idomethori ubhanditshiwe, lokhu yikho kuphela enelisa ukukubona engaphakamisanga intamo yakhe njalo engaphakamanga embhedeni: balinyaziwe.

Udinga inina elilelizwi eselibe laye okwesikhathi eside. Lalo lilapha, UNonceba ufisa ukuya embhedeni munye ngamunye, elidinga, kodwa uyakwazi ukuthi akusoze kumncede, yikudinga okungeke kwenza-kale, ukulandela ilizwi uze uyefika lapho elisuka khona. Angeke azi ukuthi abuzeni, abuze njani. Uxotshana lezithunzi. Ukukhuluma labafileyo, umuntu kumele abe kumumo wokuthula owedlula owabo. Kathandabuzi ukuthi inina ayekade elilalele lifile liphakathi kokukhala kwalo. Angenelisa ukulalela kuphela aze alizwe ilizwi lelo liphakama njalo. Angalizwa, uzaphakamisa ikhanda lakhe emqamelweni akhangele inina lelo. Ngemva kokwenza isinqumo sokuthi uzalithola njani inina leli, uNnonceba usesizwa ngcono ngokuba kuleli idomethori. Kumele aqhubeke ethule ethe zwi khona ezakuzwa wonke umsindo. Uzakwehlukanisa konke ukububula, amazwi angazwakali kuhle, njalo azwe ubuhlungu obukulelo lizwi linye alikhumbulayo. Uselenjongo manje, kuleli idomethori elide, eyokuchitha amahora amanengi lapha engaselakuphenduka abuke amaluba ehayibhisikasi. Kuleli idomethori ubhekane lomduli omude ongelalutho, omhlophe, olodwendwe lwemibheda eminengi ehele eceleni kwawo. Amawindi aphezulu, kawafikeleki, ngaphezulu kwemibheda njalo ngemuva kwakhe. Ukuthola inina leli kungaba njengokuthola ucezu lwelanga olugxunyekwe enhliziyweni yakhe.

UNonceba ubona ubuso bukaThenjiwe buphakanyiselwe phezulu, bungelanjabulo, loba nje isibhakabhaka sikhazimula siluhlaza. UThenjiwe ucabanga ukuthi uyedwa ebuhlungwini bakhe, kodwa-ke, yena, uNnonceba, uyakwazi ukulandela uThenjiwe yonke indlela aze ayefika esibhakabhakeni, ngale kwempilo. Akulalutho olungabehlukanisa. Unyenyezela uThenjiwe, emvusa, emtshela ukuthi akayedwa; bafe ndawonye, bangumuntu lodadewabo. UNonceba unyikinyisa amahlombe kaThenjiwe athuleyo kodwa uyehluleka ukumbuyisa kulokho kuthula

okuzwisa ubuhlungu obukhulu; kakho phakathi kwabo osewake wasala ephila omunye engasekho. 'Ukuze uphapse, uqala uvale amehlo kusemini libalele, njengalokhu.' UThenjiwe uvala amehlo kaNonceba ngesandla sakhe. 'Kulolutho alubonayo khathesi na?' uyabuza. UNonceba ubeka izandla zakhe phezu kwengalo zikaThenjiwe eziphezu kwamahlombe akhe njalo bama eduze laduze benda-wonye. UNonceba ufisa ukuthi uThenjiwe ahlale eseduze kwakhe kanje, emgombolozele ngelizwi lakhe. Kumnyama njalo kuyakhudumala ngaphansi kwezandla lezo eziphezu kobuso bakhe. Useqalisa ukuhleka, futhi, njengoThenjiwe.

Uma uvala amehlo akho emini libalele, ungawavula kuphela emnyameni. UNonceba ufisa ukutshela uThenjiwe iqiniso leli aselitholile ngomzimba wakhe. Ngomzimba wakhe wonke.

ISAHLUKO SESITSHIYAGALOLUNYE

UZIBUSE YISIVUMELWANO SOKUYEKELELANA engangin-geke ngaba kuso. Ngiyindoda ekhululiweyo, uSibaso, umuntu okhumbula okulimazayo. Akulalutho abalukhumbulayo. Abakhulumi ngakho ngitsho khathesi, ngoba phela angizwa ngakho. Kabakutsho ukuthi sathapha inyosi sagcwalisa izandla munye ngamunye wethu. Sabeka ingalo zethu phakathi kwenyosi. Izandla lezi ezilamanxeba, ezilenyama engekho, yizandla ezinukelelayo. Kulesiqetshana esatshayo komunye lomunye umunwe. Ucilikicane wami kasagobi. Kukhona okwathulayo phakathi kwekhanda lami. Ngaluzwa lusima njengomoya omncinyane. Ekuqaleni, ingalo yami yonke eyenxele yama ukuhamba, kumbe yahamba kodwa ngingakuzwa - yalenga. Ngahambisa isandla sami sokudla. Ngaphatha ingalo yami yenxele ngesandla sami sokudla njengolutho engangiludobhe phansi, into elahliweyo. Ukuba ndikindiki kwasabalala. Ngaphakamisa ingalo yaya phezulu laphansi ngingazi ukuthi ngizweni, ngimangala ukuthi ngizasinda njani emaqaqeni eGulati, ngifisa ukuthi ngabe ingalo ihle iwele khatshana kulokuthi ilenge ixega kanjalo. Ilakho ukuthi iqalise ukubola, ngangingelalwazi. Uma yayikwenzile, ngangingadliwa ngamanqe ngiphila. Ngaluma isithupha sami kodwa lakho akulalutho engaluzwayo. Ngaluma kakhulu ngafika ethanjeni. Yikho okwabangela ukuthi ngingabi lenyama khonaphayana. Ngangifuna ukufika kolunye ulutho, ukuze ngibuyise imizwa. Imizwa yayisinyamalele.

Ezandleni zami kulamakha emililo esayibasayo ngokutshayeleva izandla zethu phezu kwamatshe omileyo, eGulati. Idwala laliseluleka okwamamayili kungelalutho phezu kwalo, lithungwe yisibhakabhaka esiluhlaza. Lingabhobozeke. Kulokhu kwaphakama imililo yethu eyayingahlalisekanga esingazange sivumele ukuthi ilangabi layo liphakame ledlule amathambo ethu ayizigombolozisi awenqagala; safaka izandla zethu phezu kwelangabi, ukufihla umlilo ngomzimba wakho ngumsebenzi onzima ukwedlula yonke, isikhumba sitsha njengamahlamvu omileyo, sibe-ke sesiqina njengento eyonyisiweyo. Ekupholeni komzimba uthola ukuthi umzimba ulenqweqwe ezinengi ezesikhumba, ngitsho lengqondo yomuntu injengalokhu, iyafuna ukukhutshwa izigqoko kanengi, ukubanjunu kokuphela kokuphela, iphola ngamazanga njengesilonda, ngezigaba. Khangela ekucineni kweminwe yami. Le yimililo yeGulati, la ngamanxeba eGulati. Indoda yabasa umlilo ngeminwe yayo njalo yaphila. Yayisazi ukunuka kwesikhumba sayo njengamakha. Isikhumba satsha umlilo ungakalumathi. Yayivele isifile, isiyinto egejiweyo ephefumulayo. Ingalo zayo ziyisidleke sezwekazi, indawo yokulwela.

Egulasi sagebhela omaquphula endaweni zokukhonzela, phakathi kwabakhonzi ababengekho. Sabiza amagama ethu phakathi kwamathunzi endulo, ematsheni akulindayo ubusuku bonke ulele. Ilitshe libekwe phezu kwelinye, njalo kwelinye, elincinyane, khonokho nje sekulelikhulu okudlula okungabonwa yilihlo, lisedlula izihlahla, lisedlula inyani eziphapha phezulu; wonke amatshe la alenga esibhakabhakeni, ebunjwe ngokulingana. Saphendla phakathi kwamahlamvu lameva siqonde imifanekiso engazwisisekiyo. Ebusuku, amatshe ayethwala izithunzi ezisuka enyangeni zisiyawela phakathi kwezihlahla ezilengatsha ezingelamahlamvu. Izinkanyezi zazisabalele phezulu kwamatshe njalo zahlala khonapho saze sazama ukuzithinta, zasezinyamalala, kungathi zasezitshone phansi phakathi kwamatshe, ukukhanya kwazo sekucatshale amehlo ethu, lokuthinta kwethu. Izinkanyezi zigijima njengezibungu zebusuku, njengamathotshi abanjwe ngezandla.

Uma ungalala uthi daca phezu kwedwala njalo kungela nyanga, izinkanyezi zembesa umzimba wakho njengecansi elinkanyazelayo, njalo zikukhudumeze njengengubo. Uzizwa ungewe. Lapha uvikelekile, uyingxenye yezinto zalapha, uligugu, ungeke wathengwa ngalutho njengezinto ezingunaphakade. Uyinsika, njengombani. In-suku ziyadlula ezilobuhle obungasibemhlabeni njengalokhu, njalo usuka ukhohlwe ukuthi usempini, ulwisana lezinto ezikhona sibili okwedlula isikhathi. Uyazilazila ngalesi isikhathi ngendlela umuntu azilazila ngayo esemkhumbulweni omnandi, ebuyela emigelweni yamazulwini eyamatshe usuku lunye ngalunye njengakwenzayo kusithandwa asithanda okungaphezu kwengqondo, laso singagqokiswanga, sisemukela ingozi efana leyengqondo yakho, ulimukile ukuthi ungahlanyukelwa, kodwa ungavikelekanga ekulimaleni, uthola isibindi sobuthutha ngokudibana kunye ngakunye. Inyanga-ke ibe isiletha ukukhanya kwayo, ube usuphinda njalo ubona ukuma kwakho; inyanga iyaguqula, uba yinto esiqonde ukunenjwa, isitha seqiniso. Uyananzelela umlandu wakho, ukuzimisela okusemathanjeni akho okokutshabalalisa ezinye impilo ukwenzela ukuthi eyakho iqalise. Uma ulenhlanhla uzakhohlwa ngokuphangisa ukuthi wenze isinqumo esithile, okumqoka yikuthi ulapha, yilokho kuphela, ingalo zakho zigoqiwe phezu kwelitshe elikhudumala njengeziko, amadolo akho egedezela ethule.

Ufunda ukuphikisa ukulandela imikhumbulo kancane kancane. Kubhidliza ukuzibonela kwakho kwemvelo. Ufunda ukungethuswa yisitayitayi, imizwa yakho isiqine njengentambo. Angithi nje uyalandelwa. Liphutha ukuma ndawonye, ukuqalisa ukuqamba izihlahla uzazi. Lesiyana, esikhupha amathe esuka emuleni wamaluba ukwenzela ukubamba inyosi lemvevane. Uqalisa ukunanzelela umule wamaluba aso enyosini, phezu kwesikhumba sakho ilixha lamaluba, khathesi usuhlezi, ususazi njalo isihlahla lesiyana esiligumalala, esikhula emahlombe esinye isihlahla lapha okubuthene khona amahlamvu afileyo lenhlabathi, sesiqhakazile. Usume lapha okwesikhathi esinganani ukuze ubukele igumalala liqhakaza? Esinye isih-

lahla, esilenyama zaso ezilamanzi kakhulu ebusuku lapha ongahluba khona isikhumba saso ngenzipho zakho, siyatshelela, sibuthakathaka, engathi sifakwe emanzini okuphendula umbala. Kuthatha isikhathi eside kakhulu, ukuze uvumbulule lokhu, yibusuku obungaki?

Ucambalala ngaphansi kwezinkanyezi, ukhumbule ngephunga elibi eliphuma endodeni efileyo. Ngumnuko obuyela emizweni lula; ukungabi muhle kwawo kusuka ngaphakathi, njengelembu eligoqele isidumbu. Utshiya indlu yakho yezinkanyezi, ngoba phela yonke indawo igcwele izinkanyezi.

Kulendawo yokukhonzela eGulati lapha esasihlangana khona, phose singamatshumi amathathu ngasikhathi sinye. Yiso leso kuphela isikhathi owawucambalala khona useduze kakhulu lokwesaba komunye. Ubhalu oluthiwa yiMbelele. Ubhalu, olukhulu, olwaziwa kulo lonke eleGulati njengendawo ehlonipheka ukwedlula zonke indawo. Engethekelelwayo. Izakhamizi zazingeke zingene kulo, ngitsho loba zidinga umntwana olahlekileyo. Lulokukhanya phakathi kwalo okungena kubhoda lelitshe elilenga ngaphezulu kwalo, ilitshe elenza ukuthi izulu lingangeni, izulu elelaphayo. Ukukhanya kuyankanyazela njengamanzi. Lapha ukuzwa kuhlaba esikhumbeni sakho, uyazi ukuthi ukukhanya lokhu sekuhlale lapha okwamaviki; indawo evalelweyo. Ukuze ungene phakathi ukhwela ngemuva kwalo, ulenga ngomfolo lapha ukhwela, okuhlephuke khona emhlane walo kuba yisiphephelo, indawo yokubambelela esikhathini. Ngaphezulu kulesikhala esincinyane. Ubeka isandla sakho ekucineni komunye umduli, ube ususehlela phansi, inyawo zakho zingena kuqala, ziguduza umoya oqandayo. Uyayekela umduli, uphakamise umphefumulo wakho njen-gombhukutshi. Uyala ulokhu usiwa. Usufikile, usunyathele phansi, usugonjolozelwe yikukhanya okuphephethayo. Ungamanzi njalo ungumoya.

Ngalokhu kukhanya okunganganani, izihlahla ziyakhula zibhoboza iphansi lobhalu, zidinga amanzi. Izihlahla lezi kazitholi ukukhanya okuqonde ngqo kuzo, ziphefumula khonokho ukukhanya okuthe walala khonapho. Izikhathi ezinengi iphansi liyavunda, izihlahla zife

ngenxa yokuthula komoya. UMbelele ulezikhathi zakhe zomnyaka ezitshiyeneyo. Njengoba kuvalekile, umsindo kawuphumeli ngaphandle kwalo. Sasivikelekile kulowaya moya ongahambiyo. Sasingezwa lutho olungaphandle kwamazwi ethu ayebandezelwe phansi; sasingazwakali. Sasitshiya izikhali, lezigqoko zethu lapha, siphenduke njalo ngemva kokulwa okwezinyanga ezithize; kulesi sisu. Kudala sibili abantu babehlala lapha. Lokhu kwakusobala. Sathola imbiza eyayilokhu injalo ingafanga sayisebenzisa ukupheka ngayo. Sathola indoda okwasekukudala yafa. Amathambo ayo. Lenwele zayo. Njalo kuyo yonke indawo phakathi kwale imiduli yeMbelele kwakulobufakazi obusegcekeni obosizi oluncintisana lolwethu. Sasikhathazekile. Sasingavikelekanga. Sisemgidweni wethu wempi. Phakathi kwemibhobho yethu ethembekileyo. Amagiranedi. Omaquphula. Izilonda: izilonda zokutsha esezisoma seziyiphaphulu ngenxa yomuthi wokuzomisa oluhlaza okumhlotshana. Inhlakanipho yethu: ilembu lokuvala izilonda.

Ukuze uyefika eMbelele udabula phakathi kwamagusu alotshani obude, obugcwele inzala. Ngesikhathi sezulu, utshani bumanzi njalo buyatshelala, amakhowa leminenke kuphihlizwa lunyawo, amatshongololo, uhelwane lundiza phezulu, inyoni zisipha abantwana bazo izibungu, besekusithi ukunuka kotshani obulithanga kuphephethe amadolo.

Utshani obulithanga. Sasingelabizo lalobuyana utshani obenza umhlambi wamaluba ngaphansi kwenyawo zakho, obulomnuko otshisayo njengemikhumbulo yezinto esezakhohlakalayo. Umnuko lo ugqwala yonke indawo kuze kuyefika emaqaqeni. Uma ungahlala kuleyo nsimu okwesikhathi eside okwaneleyo uphanga uzwe inyosi zihlabela, inkophe zakho ziyawa, umnuko uyaqhubeka, usugcotshiwe.

Insimu yotshani obulithanga akusindawo yokuzulazula kuyo. Endaweni yalokho kumele ubambe umphefumulo wakho udlule masinyane. Uphakamisa imilenze yakho masinyane, kungela moya ofika emakhaleni akho. Ubamba umphefumulo wakho imizwa yakho ize ibhebhe, inyawo zakho zize zenelise ukwazi ummango esezi-

wuhambile lokuthi akuselangozi. Usufile ngaphandle komzimba wakho odonsela phambili. Uphefumula kuphela lowo umoya ovaletwe phakathi emzimbeni wakho. Awukho omunye. Awukhupheli umoya phandle. Kunzima kodwa ucina usukwenza kuhle ngemva kwe-sikhathi. Sekunjalo ingalo zakho ziba ngumoya owukhalelayo, njalo usundiza njengokhozi. Ujahe phambili, amadolo akho esehlukanisa utshani evula indlela ukuthi umzimba wakho utshungubale kuyo. Uy-atshelala, usutshisa, njengamanzi eliweni.

Ngokukhululeka okukhulu uyayinqoba insimu le eyotshani obulithanga. Uyekela kuhambe. Usulesiyezi ngenxa yamandla omoya otshaya usehla lamaphaphu akho. Uba lesiyezi uwele phansi, usukume masinya, ungungune igama. Kawumi uze ufike kulowo mkhandlo wendulo osematsheni, isihotsha esilesifula esidabula phakathi kwaso, abasibiza ngokuthi Simude. Siyankanyazela. Khathesi ususeduze kwamatshe amakhulu kakhulu aweGulati athinta amayezi, njalo amanzi khathesi mahle, acengekile. Mahle okokuthi kawenelisi ukubona isithunzi sakho kuwo. Uzwa angathi kawubonakali lapha ukhangela emanzini. Ukubona kwakho kwemvelo kuthi ukhe amanzi ngesandla sakho unathe, kodwa uma ungenzenjalo, umzimba wakho uzaphela amandla, ungeke usaqhubekela phambili, hatshi lamuhla. Kungcono ukuthi utshiye ngemuva intokozo le - useqa isifula lesi. Khathesi usutshiye uSimude, ummango omude ngemuva. Ususeduze lendawo zokukhonzela, phakathi kwalawo matshe eGulati antshintsha ukuma kwawo lapha usondela kuwo, anciphayo aphinde aqhele kusiya ngokutshaya kwenhliziyo yakho, amaqaga azunguzekayo, elekane ngobunono obukhulu elinye phezulu kwelinye. Usukhokhe umoya, usuphumulile, njalo amehlo akho esevuleke athi nge, sekunjalo lamatshe asethulisile, ukukhangeleka kwawo kuyavela khatshana le njalo uyananzelela ukuthi uphakathi kwamatshe. Phakathi kwamatshe. Ucatshisiwe. Yonke into kayilasiphetho, ikhonapha, hatshi wena. Amatshe ayaqhubeka ngamandla awo angafiyo. Wena wehlukene. Uyedlula. Amandla omuntu ayakhula aphinde adede. Ngitsho lalapha esengqongeni yawo, amandla ethu kasiwo awamatshe; abunjwe

ngomlilo. Inggondo yinto efayo. Umkhumbulo usala uzulazula, kwenye indawo, usuyiziqayiq. Amatshe anje; kukhona okwenza-kalayo, isehlakalo esilamandla amakhulu. Kukhona okwenzakalayo; ngumkhumbulo lowo. Uyaphila; lokhu lakho ngumkhumbulo. Uvumela ubuthongo ukuthi buhlanze umzimba wakho njengamanzi akhudumalayo, njengamanzi kaSimude acengekileyo. Uyahleka emaphutsheni akho, uyaphumula. Kulomkenke kuleli ilitsh. Uvikelekile. Khathesi. Utshani obulithanga buthandelwe emzimbeni wakho, um-nuko mkhulu njengesidumbu, yizinto ezifileyo.

Phambi kwamatshe, phakathi kwezixuku ezimfitshane kulesih-lahlakazana esigcwele yonke indawo njalo sizikhulela sodwa, siy-isithingithingi silamaluba alithanga okufuna ukubabomvu, sigcwele yonke indawo emhlabathini lowana omdala. Izihlahlakazana lezi yizindlu lapha okuzalelwa khona imihlambi yezibungu. Uvuka uphakathi kwamayezi. Liyana eGulati. Uyisidalwa esiphila emanzini langaphandle kwamanzi. Izulu likunetha ubemanzu te, likuhlambulule. Amaluba andenda esiya ekhunjini; abantu bamila impiko baphaphe njengenyoni. Uyalala, uphinde futhi.

Indawo yokuhlala evikelekileyo kakhulu ligodi elavulwa libhomba, eselethekelelwe yikufa. Indawo ezibutshelazi lomhlabathi owend-lalekileyo ovundiswe yizibungwana lezihlahlakazana ezikhula lapha kawuvikelekanga, njengamatshe angahlalisekanga, awavikelekanga. Ungeke wacatsha eduze kwelitshe, ungena phakathi kwalo, ucatsha phakathi, phakathi kobhalu lwalo olukhulu kakhulu ukudlula zonke. Likamelo eliphakathi kwelitshe lapha ongazunguza khona ingalo zakho, lapha okuzalela khona ingwe. Amehlo akho asabalala yonke indawo emadlewudlewu - uwedwa, uyisidumbu esivalelweyo. Ephahleni oluyisigombolozu, ingalo yendleleke yaqondiswa elangeni. Umgido wenyathi ngokwawo.

Ngibeka isandla sami phezu kwamatshe, okuma khona impala lamanina alamabele amade ndawonye. Amanina amade agoba angathi yimgotshwa eqinileyo ngaphansi kwamasondo enyathi ngasikhathi sinye abanye besabalalisa inyawo ziqonda elangeni. Sengisitsho

lakhathesi, ngesikhathi ngikhuluma nje, bakhonale bezingela olunye ulutho olungasinyathi, ulutho olungunaphakade. Kuyini lokho abakuzingelayo? Bayahamba bedlule imihlambi emi yodwa. Kungabe imitshoko yabo iphakanyiswe yaphambana esikhathini na, laba abagcini besikhathi? Ngale kwelitshe akulalutho ngaphandle kokukhanya. Amanina aphakamisa izandla zawo eziqondisa ekukhanyeni. Mhlawumbe izandla zawo zithakazelela ukukhanya okwehla kuvela engosini zelitshe, ukukhanya okungeke kwacima, usaba lunye ngalunye luthwele inkulungwane yeminyaka yokungakholwa.

Abantu abangaselamizimba. Imilenze yabo ixhakela emizimbeni yabo njengempande. Abesifazana bayandenda, besuka besiyakhathshana kwelitshe. Amathangazi abo kawalalutho, ungathi angathi fohlo, anciphe kakhulu okokuthi kawazange ake athwale umntwana. Zintombi ezimsulwa ezangena emathuneni ziphila zisendlalela inkosi ingakangcwatshwa. Zifa zingathintwanga. Injabulo yazo ngeyesikhathi esingemva kokufa. Kambe lokhu yikuzibulala kumbe ukuzinikela, kumbe yikho kokubili? Ukuzibulala, ukuzithandela, kodwa ngempela, yindaba yomuntu eyedwa? Ukuzinikela kutsho ukulahlekelwa yimpilo, zimpilo, ukwenzela ukuthi abanye basindiswe. Impilo zababusi ziyasetshenzelwa, kazisindiswa. Lokhu, yikuzibulala. Imizimba yabesifazane edwetshwe kuleli litshe, izintombi ezimsulwa, igombolozele indawo yamangcwaba, ilindele umkhosi wokungcwatshwa kwazo zona ngokwazo. Lapha, ilitshe liphose libe msulwa. Amadolo asakhukhuzwa yikuhamba kwesikhathi, i-inki kayisakhanyi kuhle. Kulolutho olufihliweyo: imilenze yimizila yegazi ezombazombayo - intambo ezilunyathisiweyo, elitsheni. Khatshana kwalobo ubuhle bengalo obumangalisayo, ubuso buphakanyiselwe phezu busuka emahlombe. Ngaphansi, ngaphansi kokhalo, ukukhanya kudlula phezu kwazo. Mhlawumbe zasindiswa ekujatshulelweni yimpilo. Kazifanga. Ngibeka isandla sami ekhalweni lowesifazana omude, phezu kwesiqetshana sethambo, njalo iminyaka ezinkulungwane ezingamatshumi amane iqoqana emkhumbulweni wami njengomoya weganga.

Liqiniso, zonke ezinye izinto lapha eGulati ziyabola ngaphandle kwamatshe. Phezu kwamatshe imbali imi, kayiguquki, ingeke yatshekiswa isiwe phambili kumbe emuva. Kayisinto ephindwayo. Imbali iyadeda isiyaphakathi kwengxubevange yamaqaqa kodwa kayinyamalali. EGulati ngihamba okweminyaka engamakhulu amane, ngiphinde njalo eminye ezinkulungwane ezilitshumi, leminyengamatshumi amabili phezulu. Amatshe ayadabuka avuleke, isikhathi siyaguquka njalo ngiyafakaza ukuthi ngingomunye wezihambi ezintshontsha indawo yokuhlala kwabafileyo.

Ngivula ingaphakathi yesandla sami ngiyimise ithi mba esiswini sowesifazana oselitsheni, olengalo ezichayekileyo. Umkhandlo ophakathi kwamadolo akhe, yimisebe yokukhanya. Ukuchaya kwengalo zakhe, yisimemezelo samabutho.

Kulamanzi aba khona lapha isikhathi sokuna kwezulu singakafiki. Amatshe ayadabuka avuleke njalo avumele amanzi ageleze esehla lesi-hotsha ukuze anathwe zinyamazana. Kungakabi lezulu elina ngomdumo lilikhulu, kulolutho lapha olugalulayo. Kwesinye isikhathi yilizwi nje kuphela eligalulayo.

Abantu lenyamazana kudla amaganu, kuphila ngomhluzi wawo omnandi. Kuyo yonke iminyaka, eminyakeni ezinkulungwane ezinhlanu eseyadlulayo, eyizinkulungwane ezimbili, eminyakeni engamakhulu amane eseyadlulayo, lezolo, ihosana ziphosela amanzi emoyeni, phezulu, esedlule amaqqa, njengamatshe amancinyane omfula. Amanzi athwalwa ngemiganu yezihlahla. Lo ngumgido wokwela; okuphakanyiselwa phezulu esibhakabhakeni lithemba, okutshiywa ngemuva kungaletha ukufa kuphela.

Igodi elivulwe libhomba. Ngilandela izithende zami ngibuyela lapha okudubuke khona. Ngihotsha umoya ngisizwa amaphunga awo angasiwo awemvelo. Ngiyawuhluza umoya. Ngithola izicucu ezingangcwele kuwo. Ngithola kuwo inhlanganiselo eyenziwe ngabantu. Ngilandela umnuko lowo njengenja ehlakaniphileyo. Ngihlangana lemilenze elahlelwe kude, inyama elenga ezihlahleni eziquphukileyo. Umhlabathi omagodigodi, izibonakaliso zalokho okubonakala nge-

muva kokujunywa libutho. Lesi yisigcawu sempilo yami. Lokhu yiyona mpumela yempi, inkaba yobukhona bayo. Igodi leli eligejwe libhomba yindawo yokungcwaba, inhlabathi ebuthelwe abafayo. Lokhu yikuqhatsha kokucina kwempi. Ngivikelekile. Iphansi liyakhudumala. Ngiphumula khonaphana endaweni entsha equphuliweyo. Ukunuka kwabafileyo kuyangivikela enyamaneni zeganga, empisini, kwabadinga imvumo yokwenza okutshiyeneyo. Ngilala phakathi kwengalo, lemilenze, phakathi kwesidumbu esingasela zitho esendoda esivele isikhohlakele. Le yindawo yokuphumula, indawo le etshileyo, indawo le yokukhonzela eyezinkanyezi eziyimpuphu. Ngingena empilweni zabafileyo.

Inhlabathi yingxubevange lomlotha. Ngingena ekutshiseni kwayo. Inhlabathi iyakhudumala njengento engamanzi. Ngiphakathi kwamazwi afileyo. Ngihotsha umphefumulo wabo wokucina. Ngabelana labo umkhumbulo wabo wokucina, umbono wamakha adumayo. Ngizwa imisindo yabo wokucina, amazwi atshileyo. Indoda inganyamalala ngesikhatshana nje. Isikhatshana siba ngunaphakade, phakathi kwaso indoda iba ngumsindo, ibe isiphihlika isiba ngumlotha; umsindo wokufa kwayo usala ulokhu ukhona yona isifile. Impilo yayo iyacezuka njengethambo, incibilike, ijiye ibe yinhlama enhle. Akulakulwisa okungabuyisa impilo yendoda. Akukho okungabuyisa futhi ubukhona bayo. Ililangabi, ukutshisa okubutshelazi okutholakala kusiqetshana sensimbi esigugile, idundulu lenhlabathi epholayo, icine isithule kungathi akulalutho olwenzakale ngokuphangisa. Yikuthula okuhle ngaphandle kwezibonakaliso zokufa yonke indawo, ukuquphuka okupheleleyo. Impilo yayo isidlule. Kakukhanyi kuhle ukuthi ife yodwa na kumbe lomunye. Kambe ibe iyodwa na? Ibe iyodwa na?

Ngiphakathi kwamazwi afileyo. Ngithola umlenze webhulugwe wonke unjalo uphelele. Utshisiwe emaphethelweni awo, kuthe sikici. Akulahali oluxegayo, ilembu lakhona linzima. Kalibonakali lula. Kalilamphetho. Kakulakhalo. Ilembu liqalisa phakathi laphakathi usehla lomlenze. Ibe iyindoda ende. Kulesikhwama kulo. Sihlangene, asidabukanga ndawo. Sikotshelwe ngamawuka ensimbi. Sivikelekile.

Phakathi kwaso kulempembe eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka. Kulekeltane empembeni. Ngiyibeka phakathi kwesandla sami. Ngiyigoqela ngeminwe yami. Iminwe etshileyo. Ngilesifiso esikhulu. Ngiyayiphakamisa ngiyisa elimini lwami. Lapha indebe zami zifinyelela icele layo eliyisicecedu njalo ngiyibamba ngomlomo, ngihle ngikwazi ukuthi sengizwe ubukhona bendoda efileyo.

Ngiyaphefumula kulo umkhandlo wokwedlula, umphefumulo wami ulandela owayo. Ngiyavuthela kancane kancane. Umsindo ophuma lapho yilizwi layo, ukumemeza okusuka emlotheni. Ngiphakamisa indebe yayo ngiyiletha kweyami. Yisikhathi esesabekayo. Akusikukhala, yikusingatha. Akusikusingatha kodwa ukwamukela. Impembe ibunjwe njengomnenke. Umsindo ophuma kuyo uthe kla, uhlangene, ungaqondiswa uyefika endaweni ezikude. Umsindo ubalulekile, ungeke waphindwa: kodwa-ke, indoda ilingisela indoda engaphambili kwayo, lakho konke ukusilela kwayo. Ngibamba impembe ngesithupha sami lomunwe wami wenkomba. Lokhu yikho okumele ukuthi yayiyibambe ngakho. Indoda eyayiphambili kwami. Ngiyazi sengicitshe lapha eyacina ukuthinta khona, lapha okwakubandezele khona iminwe yayo. Isingilahlekele. Ngivuthelela phansi ngikhalisa ingoma engingeke ngayizwa. Yiyo kuphela indlela yokungcwaba indoda; ngom-sindo olula kulomlotha wayo.

Ngehlisela impembe esikhwameni esisemlenzeni wesokudla. Ngihlala kuhle enhlabathini ekhudumalayo, eduze kakhulu kofileyo, khatshana lamandla abaphilayo, khatshana lami. Lapha, kule inhlabathi, kulolutho engingalwethemba, omunye umuntu. Konke engikwesabayo kuvele sekwenzakele. Kangesabi okuvele sekwenzakele; hatshi ingalo yembali enganhle, hatshi ukufa okuthintekayo okusanda kwenzakala. Isimo somhlaba yilo kuphela udaba lwami, okuyikho sibili engizihlupha ngakho. Umhlaba. Umhlaba lo. Umnyama uwela eduze lesikhumba sami, njengesikhumba. Emnyameni umoya uyaqoqana, uvunguza udlula phakathi kwezihlahla. Uvunguza utshaya izihlathi zami njalo uthela uthuli lweganga emehlweni ami, lenhlamvu ezilukhuni njalo ezicije njengezicucu zamathambo acholiweyo. Uma

ngivala amehlo ami ngingenelisa ukumelana lomumo lo omubi, ngum-
ngcwabo olomusa. Ngiphakamisa isandla sami ukuze ngivikele ubuso
bami. Amehlo ami abethwa ngumoya ovunguzayo. Ngibamba
inhlamvu zenhlabathi phakathi kweminwe yami. Ngizwa kungakubi.
Ngiyalala.

ISAHLUKO SETSHUMI

AKUSEYIKUTHINTA NJE OKULANDELA ISIHLATHI SAMI, akusikuthinta kuphela indebe yami yangaphansi, ubudlwangudlwangu bakhe obuhlaselayo, ubuhlungu obulokhu buqhubeka, kodwa kun-gaphezulu kwalokho. Ngizwa isehlakalo sinye ngasinye khathesi. Ngivalelwe phakathi kwamathambo ami. Ulapha. USibaso. Phakathi kwamathambo ami.

Ekuqaleni, lowo mzuzu kawulabuhlungu ngakho kangenzi lutho, njalo akulalutho engilwaziyo, sekunjalo ubuhlungu obuhlabayo buyaqhela, umzimba wami awunyikinyeki, ngobuhlungu obutshisayo. Udinge ubuso bami. Wabubamba. Iminwe yakhe, umkhandlo ophakathi kwamehlo ami, ubude bentshiya zami, ukwendlaleka kwamathambo ami omhlathi, isilevu sami: indebe zami, zihamba kumbe zithule. Wasika. Kuhle njalo ngokuphangisa. Isitho sinye ngasinye es-esazi ngekhanda; igazi lami elimnyama. Umlomo wami, isilonda. Umlomo wami wehlukanisiwe, udatshulwe, udonswe wehlukaniswa. Ukusikwa kokucina, akuphuzanga, kuphangise ngobunono obukhulu, umkhumbulo wakho ligazi elisemathanjeni ami.

Uyangiphakamisa engisusa phansi. Uyangibamba engimisile, ungiphakamisa ngengalo zami, ephakamisa amathambo ami aphohlokayo. Ngivala amehlo ami njalo ngithole emzimbeni wami umsindo ongigombolozeleyo, inhliziyo yami igiga esifubeni sami,

masinyane, ngiyakhefuzela. Ngiyasukuma ngisuka phansi. Igazi ligijima lisiza endlebeni zami.

Isandla sakhe siphezu kwamahlombe ami. Ngibandezela iphansi ngezandla zami, isihlakala sami sigoba, ingaphakathi yesandla sami evulekileyo. Ingalo yami igudla phansi lapha engidonsela phezulu, njalo edonsa, njalo engiphosela phambili emzimbeni wakhe. Amaphiko ayavuleka njalo ayabhakuza phezulu, yinyoni esesibhakabhakeni.

Amazwi abantu akhatshana kakhulu, khatshana le. Kakho ongezwa. Kakho obonayo. Utshani obufulele izindlu, bubomvana, bendlaleke bayaphandle, njalo izindlu ziyendlaleka njalo zincibilike zihlangane lomhlabathi oyimpunga. Khonaphayana, icele lenkalakatha zamatshe, selimnyama, engathi lithelwe ngamanzi. Umbono lo uyeza emehlweni ami, ujayekekile, kodwa ukhatshana, khatshana kakhulu, khatshana okwedlula ukuthula kwami. Usondela eduze. Ngizwa umsindo wezicathulo zakhe. Useseduze kakhulu. Udonsela ubunzima bomzimba wami engalweni zakhe njalo angidonsele phezulu emahlombe akhe. Ingalo zami zihlala phezu kweyembe yakhe. Ibhulawuzi yami idonselwa phezulu lapha angibambe khona wathi nko engibandezele kuye. Ukhalo lwesiketi sami seluxega. Ngizwa isigqoko sisehla emilenzeni yami sisiya phansi. Iyembe yakhe, etshebe igazi, iseduze kakhulu okokuthi ngiyenelisa ukuzwa umnuko wayo.

Ngiyalazi ibizo lakhe. Ngingeke ngabiza igama lakhe. Ulimi lwami luthule, ibizo lakhe likulo. Ngingabiza ibizo lakhe. Ngiyazama, kodwa ngiyamuzwa ephefumula, eduze. Ngimi, ngiphakanyiselwe phezulu ngalingana lamahlombe akhe, ngidonselwe phezulu. Yena umile elungele ukwenza olunye ulutho. Ingqondo yakhe iyabhoda. Ngiyazi uzangibulala. Ngivala ingqondo yami kalula nje njengalokho engingakwenza ngivala amehlo ami, kungelamzamo. Ngibe ngilindele; laye futhi ulindele, wacabanga kuhle isenzo sakhe, wahlala kuhle ukwenelisa kwakhe ukulimaza. Amehlo akhe akuyo yonke indawo. Lokhu ngiyakubona. Ngivala amehlo ami okwesikhatshana. Mhlawumbe kangivali ngitsho amehlo ami, kodwa ngikhutha ukubona

isenzo sakhe esilandelayo. Senzakala phakathi laphakathi kokuphefumula, ukwenza okukodwa, isenzo esisodwa. Ngithwala umzuzu lo khathesi njengobuphofu.

Ukwenza kwakhe kuyaphangisa. Angikhumbuli ukuthi ingqe yini yenzakala nini kumbe njani, ukwenzakala kwesenzo sakhe esabekayo. Ngiyadinga ngidinge isikhathi esiyiso sibili esesenzo sakhe. Angisitholi. Bengilindele, ngilimukele okunye lokunye ukuhamba kwakhe. Kulesikhathi lapha engingaboni lutho khona konke ukuhambahamba komzimba wakhe, lamagagasi engqondo yakhe. Ngilahlekelwa yisandla sakhe esisodwa ngaphansi kwengalo yami. Umnuko wakhe uyanyamalala. Intshiya zakhe. Ufuqela phambili ikhanda lami, lokhu ngiyakukhumbula, isandla sakhe siyanxiba ngemuva kwentamo yami. Okwesikhatshana. Uyayekela ubuso bami njalo izandla zakhe zombili ziphambi kwami. Lokhu angikunanzeleli. Ngithule anginyikinyeki. Angikhumbuli ukuthi ingaphakathi yesandla sakhe ingaphi, kodwa kayisekho entanyeni yami, kayisekho ngemuva komzimba wami kodwa phambi kwami. Angikhumbuli yiloba yiziphi izenzo zakhe ngingamuzwa ebandezele phezu komzimba wami, ngilandela umzimba wakhe njengesithunzi, ngilandela ukuma kwengqondo yakhe. Ingalo yakhe iyazunguzeka. Uyaphakama aye phezulu. Uyaphangisa njalo uthule. Sengiphansi futhi. Angiyiboni ingalo yakhe izunguzeka isiza kimi, njalo laye, ebambe ukuma kwami, ukugoba komzimba wami ngengaphakathi yesandla sakhe, emaphethelweni esikhali sakhe esiphangisayo njalo esibukhali. Akula msindo engiwukhumbulayo. Akulalutho engiluzwayo. Ngitsho lokuphefumula nje; okwakhe kumbe okwami. Ubuso bakhe buthulisile kangizwa ukugadla kwakhe kwakuqala. Kuwela phezu kwenyama yami, njengokukhanya phezu kwamanzi. Akwenzi msindo. Njengokukhanya okubukhali njalo okutshisayo.

Ngiyawa ngibhoda. Iphansi liza kimi. Sengiphansi, imbambo zami zibandezele phansi, ikhanda lami liyatshaya. Ngizwa igazi lami ligeleza phezu kwengalo yami, ubuso bami buphansi, phezu kwengalo yami, itshelela ngegazi. Ngiyaphila: ngizangcwaba udadewethu

ngezandla zami. Ngizaphila. Ngiyakhasa ngiquma phansi ngisiya le. Ngidinga uThenjiwe. Ngiyahohoba ngiquma phansi ngisiya le. Inqondo yami iyajanjuka, ifinyelele, ithinte ulutho oluqinileyo ngaphandle komzimba wami. Ngehlukanisa ingalo zami, ngizidonse zivuleke zifike lapha ezingenelisa ukufika khona ziquma zisiya ngale kwephansi. Ngithola ukuthulisa okuhlasimulisayo kwamahlombe akhe. Ubuthakathaka bomzimba wakhe ophanga ube mnyama ngaphansi kwezandla zami. Yonke into iba mnyama. Alukho olunye ulutho engilubonayo. Kangizwa umzimba wami uwela phansi, ungawatshwa kulokho kuthula okutshonayo okungapheliyo.

Sekungemva kwesikhathi. Ngizwa amazwi engigombolozele. Kulokuhambahamba yonke indawo. Ngizwa iphansi ligiga. Sekunjalo ngiyaphakanyiswa yilizwi elililayo. Ilizwi lidabula umoya, liseduze okokuthi kungathi liphuma emzimbeni wami.

Ilizwi yileliyana elikadadewabo kababa omdala kubo bonke, uSihle, ohlala emzini kakhulu ongekho khatshana lomuzi wangakithi. Ilizwi likaSihle libubulela phansi njengamahlamvu, liphansi okokuthi udinga igama linye ngalinye. Esizwa angani ingqe yini aseiyitshilo kayizwakalanga, uphinda igama, aphinde njalo elinye, agagase, ebambelela egameni.

Wonke umuntu umbiza ngokuthi Sihle, loba nje bonke omama eKezi bebizwa ngamabizo abantwababo, ikakhulu uma labo bantwana bengamadodana. Uhlala labantwabakhe abane - uSamkelo, uZenzo, uBongani loNkosana. Omdala kulabo bonke, uSamkelo, uselomfazi lendodakazi yakhe encane uThandolwenkosi. Ubaba esaphila, wayebiza ubabakazi ngebizo lendodana yakhe endala, uZenzo, kuphela lapha emthethisa, emtshela ukuthi angaphenduli kumbe emtshela ukuthi kasuse ubuthutha bakhe emadodakazini akhe. UThenjiwe lami sasimthanda ubabakazi. Lobaba laye wayemthanda. Sasisithi nyelele siphume endlini kababa eyezitina siqonde emlilweni wakhe wamaladle okhudumalayo kanenginengi lapho esasithola khona ithuba lokwenzanjalo. Kusihlwa sigoqela amahlombe ethu ngonyezi singene

indledlana ezombazombayo siqonde endlini yakhe; inyekevu zihlabela ngaphansi kwenyawo zethu, isihlahla sibunjwe njengenina ligida. Asesabi. Asazi lutho olulimazayo njalo sicambalala ecansini eduze leziko kuze kube ekuseni. Njalo sihleke size sihotshe yonke intuthu esuka emlilweni kaSihle. Ulelizwi elincinyane okwamagama njalo siyalalelisisa sonke isikhathi lapho ekhuluma. Sibamba amazwi ethu angahlalisekanga. Kulokuthula lokukhuluma, ukukhwela lokwehla, sonke isikhathi lapho uSihle akhona. Kulokulandelana kuhle kwamazwi. Ukuthula kuhlhlula ukuqala kwesikhathi lapho uSihle akhuluma khona asiphe imbali yakithi, njengento eligugu. Siyathula sithi zwi, sithakazelela ukuzwa ngezolo yethu, ikusasa yethu. Nxa kungelasibane, amaphupho ethu athutsha phakathi komnyama oqatha esingawuqoqa ngezandla zethu.

USihle kendelanga kuNdabezinhle Dlodlo, indoda azele layo amadodana amane. Kodwa-ke wonke umuntu lapha esigabeni uyibiza ngebizo lendodana yayo elizibulo...sekaZenzo. Emilonyeni yabantu beKezi, bathathene engathi bahlala ndawonye. USihle uyala ukutshiya ikhaya azalelwa kulo. Wethula imfihlo yakhe kuThenjiwe:

‘Uma ngingendelanga kuye, kungcono kakhulu. Khangela uyihlo losizi olulokhu lusebusweni bakhe. Unyoko wabuyela kibo ngoba wayesediniwe ngesifiso sikayihlo sokuthola indodana. Ngemva kokuzalwa kwakho wahlala laye okweminye iminyaka emihlanu kuphela wasetshiya. Umnewethu kasaphindanga wathatha. Unyoko wahamba lenhliziyo kayihlo wayingcwaba ngaphansi kwelitshe. Kangifuni ukuntshontsha inhliziyo yendoda njalo ngiyingcwabe ngaphansi kwelitshe ngenxa yesifiso esikhethe ukuyethekelela elimini lwayo.’

NguSihle osolwayo kuloba yikuphi abesifazana bakoGumede abehluleka ukukwenza kumbe abakwenza ngendlela engaqondanga; ukukhuluma labantu abangaziwayo, ukwehluleka kwethu ukuthola amadoda okwendela kuwo, njalo lobuqholo, besolwa ngamadoda emuli yakithi phela. Ngezikhathi ezinjalo uSihle ubizwa ngegama elitshengisa inhlonipho enkulu kuthiwe naZenzo. Ubaba omncinyane uM-

duduzi, umfowabo kababa, laye uhlala eduze. Ulelizwi elinjenge-siswebhu.

Ngiyalizwa ilizwi likaSihle. Umemeza wonke amabizo abantwabakhe engathi ukubakhona kwamabizo abo phakathi kwethu kuzakhangela umumo lo onzima esikuwo. Ububula ehlabela umlolozelo owehla uvela esibhakabhakeni usiza emhlabeni. Uvusa wonke amadlozi akithi. Isibhedlela seMpilo...kulomunye otshonjalo...edolobheni. Amazwi kawezwakali kuhle. Ngizwa elinye ilizwi phezu kwelinye, amazwi aginya amazwi, atshabalale phakathi kwamazwi ngingakenelisi ukuwezwa, ngiwabambe, ayafohla aphume ekhanda lami ngingakezwisisi lapha asuka khona laloba ayanelisa ukwelapha. Ilizwi likaSibaso yilo eliseduze kakhulu kulawo wonke. Lifofoza phakathi kwelinye lelinye ilizwi ngingakenelisi ukuzwa. Ilizwi lakhe lenza ukuthi wonke omunye umsindo ubhidlike. Anganelisi ukuzwa, njalo ngiyaqhuqha, sengilahlekile njalo sengiyisiphofu kukho konke okunye ngaphandle kowakhe umbono mayelana lezehlakalo, ukubelesela kwakhe exotshana lalokho okwenzakale lapha. Umbuzo wakhe. Uya-phuphuma. Sekwenzakele. Kodwa kuyini? Uyabuza aphinde abuze. Ngubani owenze lokhu? Ngubani? Kakho ambuzayo. Kakho phakathi kwethu obe elapha, hatshi mina engithwalwayo ngisuswa kukho, ngitsho loThenjiwe osefile ngenxa yokuba lapha. Ngubani?

Umphathisikolo wesikolo seKunene esemfundo ephansi uzasithwala ngemota yakhe eyilori asise koBulawayo. 'Izimota ziyamiswa zihlolwe phakathi kommango munye ngamunye ongamakhilomitha angamatshumi amathathu,' uSihle utshonjalo. Ilizwi lakhe likhatshana, kodwa lizimisele njalo kalinyikinyeki. 'Sizafika na koBulawayo?' Uyabuza. 'Lapho besibona, amapholisa azasiyekela sidlule,' kulo-munye laye ophendulayo. Ngubaba omncane uMduduzi, ilizwi lakhe libukhali lapho lilinganiswa lamanye amazwi. 'Ukumiswa kwezimota zihlolwa lokhu kungaba yingozi,' uSihle uyanyenyeza njalo, ingalo yakhe ingaphansi kwehlombe lami, ngaphansi kwengalo yami, ebambe waqinisa. Ngivikelekile ngisengalweni zakhe. Ngiyakuzwa

ukuthula, okwelizwi lakhe. Kumele ngiphile. Angifuni ukuthi un-
aZenzo asolwe ngezwi lami elingekho, ngoThenjiwe, ofileyo.

Ngiyazama ukukhuluma. Ngizama ngamandla ukuhambisa indebe
zami. Ngifuna ukubatshele konke engikubonileyo. Amanzi echitheka
ebhakedeni ekade lithwelwe nguThenjiwe. Udaka olutshelelayo,
lubomvu ngegazi. Indoda, uSibaso. Mhlawumbe ubeqamba amanga,
mayelana lebizu lakhe. Angikwazi. Ngifuna ukuchaza ukuthi
ukhangeleka njani, izwi linye ngalinye alikhulumileyo, unwele
ngalunye, ukweyisa kwakhe ngolaka olukhulu abaphilayo. Ngifuna
ukukhuluma.

Ilizwi lami liphansi, ngitsho lami kangenelisi ukulizwa. Lokhu ngit-
shona ngitsholobela sekuze kungasela lizwi elizwakalayo. Angisenelisi
ukuzwa indebe zami zihamba, kumbe ukuthola ukubumba amazwi
ami; lesimo esihambelana lamazwi ami. Inggondo yami iyalwisa, sen-
gize ngiphefumulela phezulu ubuhlungu obumnyama bungena emz-
imbeni wami, njalo ukudonsa komzimba ngamandla kwehla kuze
kufike phansi.

Ekunyamalaleni kwelizwi likaSibaso ngihle ngazi ukuthi lokhu kubi
kakhulu ukwedlula ilizwi lakhe litshisa munye ngamunye wemizwa
yami. Ngilalelisisa ilizwi lakhe futhi, njalo ngiliyekele liseduze.
Ngikhangele. Angilali. Ngizwa imota ihamba, isehla ngomgwaqo
olethara. Ngilalela amavili emota. Ngiphefumula ngonanzelelo, ngis-
esaba umzimba wami. Irediyo esitolo sakoThandabantu, umsindo we-
qembu labantu abakhulumisanayo bekhuluma kuhle, siyajika singene
emgwaqweni njalo sihambe sedlule lapha, amazwi abo aze azwakalele
khatshana ngaphansi kwamavili agijimayo. Ekuqaleni, ngumgwaqo
omadlakadlaka, ngemva kwalokho iphansi liba butshelezi, kulethara.
Ngiyasibona isihlahla somganu lapha imota ihamba isedlula njalo
sisitshiya ngemuva kwethu. Ngiyasibona lesibhakabhaka ngaphezulu
kwaso. Amahlamvu ayahamba kancane. Inina liyamemeza lingak-
welineye icele lomgwaqo. Akulamazwi elimini lwalo. Mhlawumbe
yikuqala kwebizo. Liyamemeza ilizwi lalo lize liwele ngemuva
kwethu lapha imota ihamba iqhubeka. Mhlawumbe limemeza umn-

tanalo nje kuphela.

Phambi kwethu zintaba zeGulati. Ngiyenelisa ukubuka lokhu ngengqondo imota ihamba isiyaphambili, loba ngingakukhangelanga, isibhakabhaka esiluhlaza kuphela siphephetha ubuso bami, siseduze kakhulu okokuthi ngindenda phakathi kwaso lapha sihamba sisehla ngomgwaqo, ngicambalele ngemva erolini, ngilinganisa umkhumbulo wami osuphela, ngiwulinganisa lokuhamba kwemota lobubanzi bomkhathi. USihle usekhuphile iqhiye ekhanda lakhe wabopha ubuso bami, phezu komlomo. Ilembu selimanzi ngegazi. Ngiphumula ngisemathangazini akhe ummango wonke size siyefika koBulawayo. Sekunjalo inkophe zami ziyavaleka njalo ubumnyama buyaduduza.

Ngiyezwa ukuphathwa zingalo zakhe, zimanzi ngegazi, imithambo yami iyatshaya. 'Kumele uphile,' uSihle utshonjalo. 'Khona ngizakutshengisa ilitshe lona ngokwalo owazalelwa phezu kwalo. Uyakwazi ukuthi unyoko wakuzala esiya emfuleni? Wazalwa ulenga phakathi kwamanzi lelitshe. Ungayekela njani ukuba lamandla wena ubunjwe yizinto ezimbili ezilenkani ezalapha emhlabeni. Nonceba...Nonceba...' uyamemeza. USihle ulendlela yokukuthethisa esenzela nje ukutshengisa ukuthi ukuthanda kangakanani, kodwa umzimba wami ufile lapha sihamba sisuka eKezi sidabula emaqaqeni eMatopo, sisedlula amaqqa abhodayo aweGulati, ufile. Asiboni ngitsho ipholisa elilodwa kumbe isotsha. Ngitsho. Sizihambela kuhle engathi lolu lusuku olutsha. Anganelisi ukunanzelela ummango esesiwuhambile ngoba ngikusimo esenza ngingaboni ukuhamba kwe-sikhathi. Kulesiphepho ekhanda lami. Sengifike ekucineni komnyama ongunaphakade. Nxa ngicabanga ngoSibaso ngizwa umzimba wami ugonyuluka kakhulu okokuthi umzimba wami uyaphakama uyephambili uSihle aze anyenyeze athi nginganyikinyeki. Ubandezela umzimba wami phansi. Ngiyehla ngihlale elizwini lakhe eliduduzayo, ngimangala ukuthi ngiyaphila, ngikuleliyana elinye icele lalokhu kwesabeka okungazwisisekiyo njalo ngiphila, ngisenelisa ukuvula ngivale amehlo ami engathi akusinto enkulu ukuvula ngivale amehlo ami, njalo ngithole ngasikhathi sinye ngasinye ukufa lokhuyana okufanayo

kulokhu kusithi phazi kudlula emehlweni ami, indoda uSibaso' ila-
mandla ekutholeni kwayo inhliziyu yomuntu - ilomona. Ngiyamuzwa
uhambo lonke lolu, njalo ngaphansi kwakho konke, enye ingxeny-
yami ifuna ukuhlala ikhangele, njalo imuzwe. Sekuyisikhathi eside
ngingakananzeleli ukuthi akudingeki ukuthi ngibe ngilokhu ngikhu-
luma laye ngithule ngisithi...ngiyekela ngihambe...ngiyekela ngi-
hambe.

Akulalutho olukhulunywayo. Akukho okumayelana loThenjiwe.
Ngitsho lokumayelana lempi. Akukho okukhulunywayo okungabuy-
isa uThenjiwe kithi futhi. Akulalutho olukhulunywayo lamuhla kumbe
kusasa. Akulalutho.

ISAHLUKO SETSHUMI LANYE

NGALWA NGISEMAQAQENI ASEGULATI. Ngiyindoda esizidele ekuxolelaneni. Ingqondo yami iyabila njalo isikhululeke kuhle sibili. Ingqondo yami iyimvubelo. Kuyini ukuphila? Ngemva kwesinye isibanga lokho okukhona kucina kungasahambelani lezifiso zethu. Ngathi ngizalwa umama wayevele esefile. Wayengasaphefumuli. Ngantsheza ngaphuma emzimbeni wakhe owawugeleza njengomfula. Yikho lokhu ukuba ngophilayo. Ngiphakathi kwalabo abagalulileyo, labo abalemicabango ebona okufihlakeleyo. Kukangaki ngilala ngikhangele egangeni ngibona isibhakabhaka sizala izinkulungwane zezinkanyezi? Ngibeka isandla sami sivulekile. Khonaphayana, esandleni sami, kubonakale insaba ezizinkulungwane zokukhanya, iminyaka eyinkulungwane. Mingaki iminyaka, isandla sami sikhangeze izinkanyezi, imizwa yami yonke ingakabuyi futhi. Ngibala amadlozi akithi angaziwayo eminweni yami efileyo. Oyedwa owangcwatshwa ngokulengiswa. UNehanda, owesifazana. Uyangivikela ngamathambo akhe. Ngiyakujabulela ukufa, kulilangabi.

Edolobheni. Ngihamba ngedlule izindlu ezixhumene zabambili ezesitalada engangihlala kuso ngaphambilini; amakamelo amabili imuliyinye ngayinye. Ngihamba ngiphakathi kwephupho elingaciniyo. Kuhle ukuthi izulu liyana. Angihlangani labantu abanengi.

D43874, D43875, D43876, D43877. Ziyaqhubeka kokuphela. Inombolo zezindlu zikhanya nge-inki emnyama ngaphansi kophahla olu-

fitshane olwama-asibhesta, ngaphezulu komnyango wangaphambili munye ngamunye. Izindlu zipendwe ngependa eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka, ehlangene lobuhlaza botshani, ubuthanga belemoni lombala wamampintshisi. Indlu yinye ngayinye igonjolozelwe ngocingo, olungadluli imitha ukuya phezulu. Izixukwana ezincinyane zisikelelwe kuhle. Udwendwe lwamatshe aconjwe ngokumhlophe; ingqe yini engenza umngcele ilungile. Ukuze ungene egumeni linye ngalinye, kulegedi: elenziwe ngesivalo esidala semota esesithombile, ngama-pulanka ahlanganiswe ndawonye, elingene amacele wonke, apendwa, langocingo olwelukiweyo lwagoqwa lwaphindwa kabili lwaselufakwa ensimbini eligedi. Lezi izinto ngizibona ngalapha okuphelela khona umbono wami, amanzi ehla esuka ebusweni bami egombolozela amehlo ami. Liyana. Izulu lesikhatshana nje. Esandleni sami sokudla kulesihlahla, siyakhazimula, sithe niki ngamalemoni. Ngiyahamba. Akulandaba. Ingalo zami zihamba phakathi kwezulu.

Nguzibuse lo. Izandla ziyaphakanyiswa ngamawindi. Izandla ezingelamazwi, zikhanya ngemuva kwamangilazi emawindini. Zingatsha ezimnyama ezinyakazayo. Isivunguzane. Amathonsi ezulu. Iwindi liyavuleka. Ilizwi liyaklabalala, lidabula umoya okwelembu. Ngiselokitshini leNjube. Kuthi lapho ngiphakamisa ingalo yami ngiqoqoda, omunye umuntu uvula isivalo. Yilizwi engingaliqambiyo ukuthi ngelikabani.

‘Yebo. Ngingakunceda na?’ Uyabuza. Ngihle ngazi masinya nje ukuthi indlu le khathesi isingeyakhe.

‘Ibizo lami nguSibaso. Ngidinga ubaba.’ Ngimupha ibizo. Uzunguza ikhanda lakhe njalo aqhubeke elokhu ebambe isibambo sesivalo, engaphakathi. Ugqoke ivesi, lokabhudula omhlophe owenziwe ngotshinda. Kagqokanga lutho enyaweni.

‘Kahlali lapha. Angimazi,’ utshonjalo, ezunguza ikhanda lakhe futhi engathi uxotsha ubuthongo emehlweni akhe. Ngiyamkhangela. Ulamehlo ayizifaca amsulwa, lamathambo omhlathi aphezulu, muhle okwedlulisileyo, kafanelanga ukuba yindoda. Ulomzimba omncane. Angaba leminyaka engamatshumi amathathu. Laye udingisisa ubuso bami.

'Ngangisempini. Sengiphendukile, labanye. Ngangihlala lapha kudala.' Ubuso bakhe kabuguquki. Uyesaba, mhlawumbe.

'Kangimazi uyihlo. Ngathenga indlu le kwenye indoda. Ngomnyaka ophelileyo. Ibizo layo lalitshiyene kulalelo. Ingabe yayimazi uyihlo. Kodwa seyafa. Yabulawa luquhuqho. Yayivalelwe esitokisini. Abesitokisini bathi kwakungela maphilisi ekhwinini. Akulamuntu owayathatha isidumbu sayo, lokho yikho okwenza ngazi. Bafica ikheli leli kuyo. Kwakuthiwa indodana yayo okuyiyo yodwa isegangeni. Lokhu yikho okwabangela ukuthi ivalelwe. Ukuthi aphenjule imibuzo. Ibizo layo lalehlekile kwelakho. Ngingalicinga, uma ufuna ukumelela.' Uhlehlela emuva. Emnyameni wekamelo. Ekhitshini. Ngangihlala lapha kudala. Ngiyayazi indlu.

'Kulungile. Ngizakhuluma labomakhelwane. Mhlawumbe bayamkhumbula njalo balekheli. Mhlawumbe bayangikhumbula.'

Ngiyaphenduka ngisuke ngihambe. Kangilasifiso sokukhuluma labomakhelwane. Mhlawumbe ubaba sewaguqula ibizo lakhe, njengami. Kungenzeka ukuthi kasuye baba owafayo. Ngivumela ithuba leli ukuthi libekhona, ukuthi lingihlanganise losekwadlulayo. Ngiyadingisisa ngalo umuntu osehlala lapha, hatshi ngobaba. Kungani indoda le ingahlanganyeli labanye ezitaladini? Isitalada sonke lesi sisemkhosini wokuthakazelela uzibuse. Isela lingayantshontsha komunye lomunye umuzi, njalo kakho ongananzelela. Akulamuntu phakathi. Bekulemikhosi nsuku zonke ephongwenziwa kungabanga lamalungiselelo. Umuntu uyaphonguvuka ebuthongweni phakathi kobusuku, ahambe esiya endlini yinye ngayinye, aqoqode emnyango munye ngamunye, ebika ukuthi uzibuse uselapha. Isehlakalo lesi esomuntu oyedwa kasibekezelelwa kuphela. Siyalingiselwa. Ukuthakazelela ulutho yikuba lenjabulo engelamkhawulo. Angithi phela, isizwe sonke sikuphe imvumo yokujabula; sikuphoqelela ukuthi ujabule. Ukwemukela kwakho kumele kwenzakale khonapho khonapho; uma ungalinda kuze kwedlule uzibuse uzagida wedwa ezitaladini; bonke abantu bazakuba sebevale iminyango yabo lamawindi, sebediniwe yikuthakazelela uzibuse. \

Inyawo zami zingakafiki esitebhisini sokucina ngisehla ngisuka emnyango wakhe, umuntu lo osehlala lapha uyangibiza.

‘Mhlawumbe lokhu kuzakunceda. Ngikufice ekhitshini. Yiyo kuphela into eyatshiywa endlini. Ngicela ukuthathe. Ungakupha abanye kamuva. Kwakusendlini ekhitshini. Kwakungela olunye ulutho futhi.’ Ungiqhubela ugwalo. UFeso olwalotshwa nguSolomon Mutswairo. Ngiyalwemukela. Sengake ngalubala ugwalo lolu. Ngalubala ngomnyaka wami wakuqala eYunivesithi, njalo ngatshiya izifundo zami ekupheleni komnyaka. Ugwalo lolu lwasinda njani kuzo zonke leziyana inkambo zami? Ngiphakamisa izandla zami, ingaphakathi yazo yendlalekile, izithupha ziphakeme. Ubeka ugwalo phakathi kwenkomba eyatshayo lesithupha. Ukhangela izandla zami engathi khona engizwisisa okwakuqala. Ngintshintsha ugwalo ngiluse kwesinye isandla, esenxele. Ubuka ukwenza kwami njengomuntu ebuka unwabu, emangala ukuthi luzafika na egatsheni olulandelayo.

‘Ngiyabonga,’ ngitshonjalo kuye, yena elokhu ethe nama esivalweni. Amehlo akhe ayasuka elangeni. Kumele ukuthi wayehlale khonapho ikuseni yonke. Ngiyasuka ngihambe ugwalo lusesandleni sami njalo ngidinge emoyeni izandla ezizunguzwayo, zizunguzelwa injabulo.

Injabulo: ngumsebenzi okumele ufezwe ngokuphangisa. Kodwa bakhona, abanjengalo umuntu osehlala endlini, abazibambayo. Bama phambi kwezibuko badinge elabo iqiniso, njalo bamangale ukuthi kambe usuku olutsha lungabe lumayelana lani. Umuntu onjalo owehlukene labanye uzathatha uzibuse njengento yakhe yedwa, njalo uhlala endlini, akhiye umnyango wakhe, avale amawindi ngelembu elidabukileyo ukwenzela ukuthi ilanga lingene kodwa kungabi lomuntu ozakholwa ukuthi uyaphila. Uzakuzwa kuqoqodwa. Uzavula isivalo kumbe asiyekele sivaliwe, esenza lokho akhetha ukukwenza. Ngamthanda umuntu lo owayesehlala kule indlu; wayengakukholwa okwenzakalayo ephakathi komsindo omkhulu wenjabulo. Wayengazwisisi ukuthi abantu babesenzani ngezandla zabo ziphephezelisa amafulegi amancinyane emoyeni okwamaviki amanengi. Kwamenza wanyela inhliziyo, njalo kwathi lapha engibona, mh-

lawumbe wangizwela usizi ngokuphatheka kwami. Kazange azicecise njengabanye, watshiyana lalabo abasebetsihona begqoke izigqoko ezidulayo ilanga lonke, njalo besiya emabhawa begqoke amayembe a-ayinwe kuhle, besiyana iChibuku. Amanina abo, ababeywayele ukuwatshiya ngekhaya khathesi nje asethutsha enamathele ezingalweni zabo, egqoke iziketi zepholiyesta lamabhulawuzi ejojethi, lezicathulo ezilezithende ezinde okwama-intshizi amathathu, ezilengaphezulu yazo eyenziwe ngezikhumba. Ubucimbicimbi obenziwe inwele zamanina bukupha umcabango wamanga wokuthi umuntu wonke uya emtshadweni othile.

Phakathi laphakathi kwesitalada, sengibanga eNjube High School, lapha engifuna ukugadela khona ibhasi eya enzikini yedolobho, ngikhethe ukuvula ugwalo. Ngihlolisisa imibhalo ebhalwe ngamabala amancinyane emakhasini alo akuqala. Ngizwa ukuqhuma ekhanda lami. Ngibambeleva ecingweni lwesikolo, njengesibotshwa. Nginamathela kulo ngiqine nko, umlomo wami usuwomile. Okubanjwe phakathi kwamakhasi ogwalo amadala yimephu egoqiweyo. Itshwabehene. Kulomzila owodwa kuyo odwetshwe samtshoko. Indlela yami yokuphunyuka. Leyo minyaka emineni eseyadlulayo. Phakathi kwemephu lekhasi lakuqala logwalo ngithola isayobe esapantshazelwa khonapho sabandezeleka ngokuhamba kwesikhathi. Isayobe lesi sesanamathela embhalweni. Kambe isayobe savinjezelwa lapho amakhasi, ayeke avuleka, avalwa masinyane nje, masinya kakhulu okwehlula ukuthi inyawo zaso ezinde kodwa ezigobileyo zisithwale sibalekele ingozi? Asitholanga sikhathi sokuthi sigijime siyephezulu ngobulembu lobuyana obuyisiliva. Ubulembu besayobe. Sengabona ubulembu besayobe izulu lisina, eGulati. Kulomchilowamakhosikazi odlula owodwa ebulembini. Ubulembu obenziwe ngobunono obukhulu buthwala imichiloyamakhosikazi emineni. Akukhathalekile ukuthi umchilowamakhosikazi unzima kangakanani, umchilowamakhosikazi ungeke wephule iqolo lesayobe: ubulembu besayobe kabuqamuki. Buyeluleka, njengesikhathi. Kulesi sayobe, umchilowamakhosikazi uqamule ubulembu baso. Empini, isikhathi siyaphotheka

sibe yintambo eyodwa. Intambo le yisibopho. Akusizo zonke izibopho ezihlonitshwayo kuthiwe zingcwele. Esakhathesi kungaxoxiswa ngaso, esedlulayo, zinyawo zesayobe ezazike zaba zinaliti.

Ngaphansi kwale imephu endala ngithole ichatha lesayobe. Ibala liyacatsha ngaphansi kwaleli chatha lapha isayobe esanamathela khona ephepheni elidala. Iphepha leli lidala, kodwa hatshi ubudala obenelayo ukuthi isayobe siguquke sibe yisimo esitshiyeneyo, ukuthi sigcobe ichatha, njengetiye echithekileyo. Hatshi. Kasisidala okungako. Ngiphakamisa iphepha njalo ukuma kwakho kuyakhithika lombule wamazwi, into eseyonyiswayo endenda ekukhanyeni kwemini, ilembobombobo njengehlamvu elomileyo. Ngiyacabanga ukuthi kambe izayobe ziyophana na zingakafi, zingakomi.

Isayobe esibandezelweyo ngumzila nje obonakalayo kuphela, ukuma kwaso ngumzila nje odwetshwe ngelahle - wonke amathambo aso ephakanyiselwe ngaphandle, silesimo saso ngemva kokubandezelwa phakathi kwamakhasi ogwalo; kuseneliseka ukubanjwa kwaso phakathi kwamakhasi; kungeke kwahlangana lamabala. Abantu baqina babenjengamatshe ngokungcwatshwa elitsheni, hatshi ngokulengiswa emoyeni. Emlilweni, bayatsha. Elitsheni, amathambo abanjwa anganyikinyeki. Phakathi kwawo wonke amazwekazi, yizwekazi le-Afrika kuphela okwazakala khona isayobe esibandezelweyo sisodwa sifile. Ilahle elipheleleyo.

Ngivula ikhasi linye ngalinye elile-inki esicitsha. Iphepha liyagqana kancane ngasikhathi sinye uthuli luphuma lubanjwa yikukhanya. Iziqetshana zindenda zisiya phezulu ngensaba zokukhanya. Zilula okwenyawo zesayobe. Isikhathi siqhubekela phambili.

Ngaphandle kokuba usazi kakhulu okudlulisileyo ngezayobe, isayobe esifileyo sabandezelwa phakathi kwamaphepha ungeke utsho ukuthi ngesiduna kumbe ngesisikazi. Into le enje engelabunzima kumele izwiwe kanye nje nguye wonke umuntu, njalo ngazo zonke izikhathi, yizizwe zonke.

ISAHLUKO SETSHUMI LAMBILI

SEKUSILE, YISIVUNO OKUMELWANA LASO. Izinto zihlanzekile okungathi zihlanjiwe, ziyakhanya njalo okubonakalayo, zitshone phakathi kokukhanya. Inggondo yami iswela ubukhali obulingana lalokho. Akulakukhanya okuqinisekileyo kuyo. Sengibona okungenelanga. Ukungakhanyi kuhle okusekamelweni kuvala yonke into. Ukukhanya kumsulwa. Imiphetho yakho ithe klwi kuhle. Inggondo yami ifiphaza yonke into ngize ngintsheze entweni ebanzi engakhanyiyo engamanzi. Imvava zokukhanya ziyandenda ekamelweni lapha engiphupha khona ngikhangele, kodwa ngingaphili okweqiniso. Ngivuka ngiphakathi kwamaginqo, ngimanzi te. Ngivuka lebizo lika-Thenjiwe linamathele elimini lwami, umlomo wami ugcwele amathe. Imilenze yami iqine nko. Akulangxenye yomzimba wami eyenelisa ukuhamba; iminwe yami, ingalo zami, zonke izitho zomzimba wami zithule kazinyikinyeki. Ngicambalala embhedeni ngilalela umzimba wami uphenduka kancane usiba yilitshe. Umhlathi wami ubanjwe waqina nko. Angiklabalali. Sekunjalo ngibona ulutho luhamba. Ngibona ukukhanya kungena ngesefa njengezulu elilula. Ukukhanya sekufafazeke ikamelo lonke. Ilizwi elizayo lizwakala kuhle kakhulu kimi okwedlula ukukhanya.

USihle ungena ekamelweni eqonda kimi. Wesula ibunzi lami ngelembu elimanzi. Uthatha ingalo zami ezilukhuni azise kwezakhe. 'Uvikelekile,' uyanyenyeza. Ngihambisa ingalo zami, ngikhulumela

phansi okungazwakaliyo, umlomo wami ulukhuni, engathi uthungiwe, uthungwe njengomphetho wesigqoko, ugoqiwe; unzima ngokuba ndikindiki. Kangenelisi ukukhuluma, ibunzi lami linzima. Ngithwala amazwi ngemuva kwengqondo yami, amabizo ezinto, izinto, izindawo engingazaziyo. Ubuso bami bonke buvuvukile, njalo buyadikiza. Isikhumba esikubo sidonsela phansi njalo siyaqina, sekunjalo amazwi ami aphanje abuyele phakathi. Umlomo wami kawusela mazwi, usumuncene. Intambo engena lokuphuma kimi izacina ikhithikile. Ngilala ngichaye ingalo zami phezu kwamathangazi kaSihle, ubuso bakhe bungilindile njengomntwana. Sengivula amehlo ami futhi ngithola ukuthi kuvele sekusebusuku.

Ngingedwa ekamelweni. Ingalo zami zithe le kuhle ngapha langapha komzimba wami. Isikhumba emlonyeni wami siyaqhezuka njalo sidabuka engathi yisidaka. Ngihambisa umunwe wami emaphethelweni omlomo wami. Isikhumba siyaxexebuka sisiba yiziqetshana ezincinyane njengezicucu zengebhezi. Ngiyavula ngivale umlomo wami. Ngihotsha umoya ungena emzimbeni wami. Nginyakazisa umlomo wami ubusuku bonke, emnyameni. Ngihlafuna umoya. Ngikhat-hazekile, ngiyahlola ukwenelisa kwami ukukhuluma. Lokhu ngingazange ngizwe ilizwi lami okwesikhathi eside kangaka. Umsindo uhamba usuka ngaphansi kwesifuba sami, ukhwela usiza emphinjeni wami. Umsindo ohadlazekeyo, ohwayayo, njengophepha. Ngivala umlomo wami, ngiphefumula ngidonsa umoya kakhulu, amazwi ami aze ancibilike. Ngizwa amazinyo ami ethinta, etshaya, eluma ilitshe. Akulasibane esisele ekamelweni. Ikhethe selivaliwe. Umnyama yingoma yenyekevu eza ngokuphangisa. Ukuklabalala, okuhlabayo, okulolaka. Ngibengingasuthiseka, ukulingisela umsindo lo. Ingoma yezibungu ehahazayo; imizila emnandi ephindwaphindwayo.

Ikuseni ithwele umsindo oza ngokuphangisa ugijima njengezulu elikhulu kodwa lokhu akusilo zulu, ngumoya okaNtulikazi olamandla, ongaqhubeka ilanga lonke kungela lathonsi lezulu elisuka esibhakabhakeni. Ngizwa inhlabathi isukuma. Umoya uphezulu njalo uyayaluza utshayelela ngamandla emidulini. Ubutha inhlamvu zenhlabathi

ezomileyo uziphosele phezulu kophahla olufulelwe ngotshani, utshaya usehlela phansi. Izinja zikhonkotha zicambalele phansi. Umsindo wazo kungathi yikugonyuluka okuncanyazana nje, njengokwesaba kwami. Ngikhangela ngewindi ngibone umoya usibamnyama, uyaluza usedlula. Ikuseni isilahlekelwe yikukhanya kwayo. Umoya uvunguza ngamandla isiyaphambili njalo ingatsha ziyacezuka. Inhlamvu zenhlabathi ezinzima zitshayeleda emidulini yenhlabathi. Umoya utshayeleda phezu kwensimbi zenqola ezikhamisileyo ezibekwe ngemuva kwendlu. Umsindo oyisiliva njengezihlephu ezibukhali zengilazi uzwakala lapha inhlabathi itshayeleda phezulu kwensimbi, usika njengengqamu emaphethelweni enqola. Inkalakatha yelitshe ithutsha ngaphandle eduze kwensimu engemuva kwezindlu zomdaka lendlu yezitina, livale indlela, ilitshe elikhulu eliyaphezulu elilolongekileyo, liqondile njalo liyisigombolozu phezulu limi lisedlula zonke izindlu. Umoya uyazungeza utshayeleda ematsheni kokuphela, ubukhali, uhadlaza, ungenelisi ukususa kumbe ukubhoboza ilitshe lelo. Ngiyaphenduka. Inhlamvu selinamathele ewindini. Libandezelwe kulo. Ngiyalibukela lapha umoya uvunguza uqonda yonke indawo, ngaphandle kwalo. Inhlamvu selithe nama, lendlaleka. Lithi selisehla lisiyaphansi litshelele njengomnenke, kube umoya lawo ususukile. Lokhu ngisizwa imisindo etshiyeneyo, umoya ufuqa ngaphansi kwe-sivalo; umsindo ohlabusayo. Izihlahla sezisuswe amahlamvu azo. Inggondo yami ithule. Kayigijimi njengomoya. Ithule ithe zwi. Njengehlamvu elisewindini, ibandezelwe phansi yimicabango egijima iphikisana layo. Ilwisana layo.

ISAHLUKO SETSHUMI LANTATHU

NGU-1982 NJALO UYENELISA ukuzwa umnuko wamaganu agcwele phansi asuka esihlahleni esikhulu esomganu, umnuko uzwakala kude le, udlula lo umuzi usiya komunye, uphinde udlule omunye, ubhoda iKezi yonke ufika lapho umzimba wakho okuvumela ukuthi ufike khona. Uma ungeke wenelisa ukuzwa uqhatshi lwawo, ngenxa yaloba yisiphi isizatho, ngeqiniso ungawuzwa ngendlebe; lukuzo zonke ingqondo zabantu beKezi ohamba yedwa lozithuleleyo. Amaganu abekhithika wodwa kokuphela esuka esihlahleni somganu njalo khathesi izulu seliseduze, uma kuvele kuzakuba lezulu. Ngomnyaka ophelileyo umumbu watsha futhi, watshiya abantu abanengi belambile njalo behlukuluzekile, njalo bemangele okwedlulisileyo. Akulasivuno. Manje lokhu. Isihlahla somganu besilokhu sizala sikhithiza amaganu singaphumuli kusukela phakathi laphakathi komnyaka, njalo ekuseni lapha umoya uhlangabeza ukukhanya kwakuqala, ndawonye lalokho kukhanya lokuhlangabezana kwakho, kuloqhatshi lomhluzi ongwele njalo ophosa ube ngongcolileyo. Lapha amadabukakusa esiba yikusa, ubumnyama busiba yikukhanya kweqiniso, uqhatshi luyathuluka. Luyageleza. Luphephuka lufike engqongeni, kuthi sekusemini, abesifazana babe sebeziphunga ngengatsha zamaphane njalo bezithela ngamanzi esehla ngomkhandlo ophakathi kwamabele abo. Bazama konke abangakwenelisa ukuze basinde kulo umoya omangalisayo njalo olobuhle obulula. Umoya ubukhali

okokuthi uphosa uwuzwe ngomlomo. Bazama konke okulula lokuthuleyo, bephunga amanzi aseqhageni, bevula isivalo sikhamisa kakhulu besenzela ukulinganisa izinto lokuletha ukuhambelana kwazo, ngasikhathi sinye ilanga lizehlele liguqula imithunzi isiya kwelinye icele lezindlu, liselula izinto ezilobude lommango.

Usuku lude, imisindo izwakala yonke indawo. Kuthi sekufika phakathi laphakathi ngemva kwemini enkulu umzimba uyabe usuzilungisele ukumelana lomumo okhona njalo yonke imisebenzi isingenziwa iphele, loba nje uqhatshi luzwakala lunzima, lugcwele emoyeni, luhlamba yonke into ngokukhanya kwalo okulalisayo, amagcobo alamakha alolozela imizwa; inkophe zamehlo zivaleka zodwa. Umhlabathi uyaphenduka uzilungise wodwa. Umhlabathi uhazwe ngamaganu alithanga, izinyoni zehla zindiza emoyeni oncibilikayo, zendlale impiko zazo njalo ziziyekele zinjalo zithule zinganyikinyeki kungathi zimpiko zendizamtshina, zihlale lapho inyawo zabantu ezingazake zihambe khona njalo zimunye umhluzi wezithelo ezithe wathalala. Ilanga liwela ngale kwesibhakabhaka njalo ngokuphangisa okulinganayo uqhatshi lalo luyema emoyeni. Luyanyamalala, hatshi kancane kancane kodwa njengokufuqwa kwelitshe, kucatsha ngaphansi kwamanzi, khonokho nje: kuze kube sekuseni. Usuku lwehlukani swa lube zingxenye ezimbili: umnyama, olomoya om-sulwa, lokufisa: ukusa kwelanga, okulokucicima kwamaganu. Akuzake kwenzakale ngitsho, ngitsho sibili ukuthi umuzi umelane lo-qhatshi olunje, oludakayo, olungakholekiyo, akukaze ngitsho ngezikhathi zokuthula, ngezikhathi siphakathi kwempi yenkululeko, njalo ngempela ngitsho langesikhathi sithola uzibuse. Ngumumo og-wabisela imizwa kakhulu, ungamsulwa kodwa umangalisa. Yikho kodwa abakukhumbulayo okubaxhumanisa lokusa njalo bangeke baqale ukugamula isihlahla somganu besigamulela ukusibasa kumbe ingqe yisiphi esinye isizatho, bangeke bakholwa ezintweni okuthiwa ziyazila, bekhetha ukuqiniseka bekulowo moya omnengi njalo on-jengephupho lezithembiso zawo zokuhlenga. Isihlahla somganu. Babambelela ekuzaleni kwaso kakhulu, ngempela, imikhumbulo yaso

eseyedululayo. Khona nje, kuvele kakusekho okuseleyo okungokwabantu bonke kusukela kulolo suku isitolo sakoThandabantu sisitsha siphela du. IKEzi yindawo elangazelela ukusindiswa; impi, isomiso, ukufa lokuhlamukelana: indawo ehlala abantu esiyinkangala njengale idinga ilumbo.

Osekusele mayelana lesitolo sakoThandabantu yimikhumbulo esikhatshana le, loba ubude besikhathi bungobesikhatshana nje kulokunengi osokudle imikhumbulo, okukhona khathesi sekuvala okwedlulayo lokuzayo. Kudala, ukutshona kwelanga kwakubathinta njalo kudala ingxoxo, kuletha ukuhlaliseka, ukukhanya, ebusweni babo, ukuzwakalela phansi kwamazwi alolozelayo lenduduzo. Umfana owelusayo, ephakamise induku yakhe njalo etshaya ukhwelu luqaqamba phezulu, izinja zakhe ezimbili zikhonkotha zithinta umhlambi oqambuka kwezinye, uthinta inkomo zingene esibayeni. Umhlambi wenkomo uhamba usedlula ibholoho lomfula uKwakhe uqonda elangeni eselisiba lithanga, umfanyana kagqokanga lutho enyaweni, uyaphangisa, evuse ingqondo. Ulandela ngemuva njalo udobha imali yelitshe esilindweni sebhasi, ubuso bakhe buba lemifolo, uyadinga ukuthi okubhalwe phezulu kwemali le kungabe kusithi Rhodesia kumbe Zimbabwe, enye isiyisikhumbuzo nje qha, ngenye yakhona angagijimela koThandabantu athenge iziwiji umhlambi wakhe ungakaqedi ukuchapha ibholoho.

Ingxenye yevulandi lakoThandabantu ilokhu ikhona, iphelele njalo ingaphazanyiswanga lutho, okulokhu kukhona njalo ngumduli oqatha owendlalekileyo ophansi owakhiwa wabhoda levurandi, uxhuma insika inye ngayinye. Loba kulothuli lemvuthuluka, isitubhu silokhu sisakhanya njengendawo, ebutshelezi njalo ethanyelekileyo ngokuhlala isetshenziswa. Lapha, amasotsha esifazane ake aphumula khona ngesikhathi sokumiswa kwempi, agcwalisa isifiso sokufuna ukwazi lokwesaba kubo bonke abantu beKezi, ekhafulela emhlabathini, ehlikihla intuthu yomlilo emehlweni awo, egobisa inqulu zawo edonsa intambo ezixegayo ezamajambo awo ukuthi kuqine ngendlea ewaphatha kuhle. Ivurandi liyaduma okwezinyanga lezinyanga ngomsindo ola-

mandla wokunyathela kwawo, amabanga awo amade, amandla awo angapheliyo, ukukhangela kwawo okutshengisa ukuzethemba ekhangela ubuso obukhanya bufuna ukwazi. Agodla amalofu ezinkwa ezitshisayo ngaphansi kwengalo zawo njalo ahambe esedlula izindlu njalo ehlele esihotsheni, eqonde eNkambeni yokuButhanela abavela empini abayibiza ngokuthi Sondela; ngaphansi kwenyawo zawo kulemvuthu zamahlamvu omileyo, izingatsha ezincinyane njalo lengebhezi zezibungu.

Ahlala emantendeni, ngamaseyili aqatha abethelwe phansi kwelinye icele, kwelinye, ilembu eligubuzeleyo libotshelwe emzimbeni wesihlahla. Amanina la kuthiwa alala egqokile enjalo ephелеle, ephakathi kwamajambo lawo - ndawonye lawo kulamakhulu amane amasotsha ahlala phakathi kocingo lwameva olugombolozele umhlaba wenkamba yawo. Uzibuse uselapha. Amahelikhoptha angcolisa umoya eduma esedlula yiloba ngasiphi isikhathi selanga. Amasotsha akhangela phezulu asithe amehlo awo ngezandla aziyekela zinjalo kungathi atshengisa inhlonipho, ngaphezu kobuso bawo. Akhothama ngaphansi kwezixuku zameva ezilamaluba, enganaki ukuhwaywa, akha amaluba amahle, awaphosele emoyeni, awagame ngobuso obuphendulwe bakhangela phezulu bugcwele ithemba. Andenda ayephansi. Akholisa ubuthakathaka abuzwa emalubeni njalo abedlulayo bawakhangela belokudideka bethule. Ehamba etshanini. Ehamba phezu kwetshebetsebe lomfula uKwakhe ngaphansi kwebholoho, ethutsha ngale kwalo, ehamba phezu kwesihlabathi esibuthakathaka betshona size sifike enqagaleni, njalo ayadonsa, etshona, etshelela, etshona esihlabathini somfula uKwakhe esitshonayo sibuthakathaka.

Usuku lunye ngalunye ayazula esuka eNkambeni yokuButhanela aye koThandabantu aphinde aphenduke, enganaki imingcele, exotsha isikhathi lommango, eceza ibholoho njalo ehamba eceleni komfula uKwakhe ingqe ngasiphi isikhathi azithandela sona. Ivurandi leli kwakungumuzi wawo, aliguqula, njalo abayinkululeko ngokwayo. Aletha uzibuse kungalindelwe, waba liqiniso, njalo impi yenkululeko eyalwiwa egangeni yaba yinto yeqiniso njengokubakhona kwamasot-

sha la. Inkululeko: indlela yobunjalo, ilizwi, umzimba wokukhangela. Kuleli ivurandi uzibuse engabukelwa njengelanga likhatshana le; isandla esiphakanyisiweyo singabamba ezinye insaba zalo ezilutshwane. Amasotsha esifazane abumba imifanekiso ngozibuse alungisa imizimba yawo ukuthi ihambe kancane. Elindele. Khonapha.

Lamuhla, iphepha eliziphephukela lodwa liyabanjwa yisitubhu esiphakemeyo, insiba, lamakhasi emfe. Imbuzi zeqa phezulu kwemfucua yezitina lesamende, umduli owadilikayo, inhlanganisela yamangilazi afileyo, imbodlela eziphahaziweyo, izigodo ezitshileyo, incezu zamashelufu, imgubazi yensimbi egobileyo, imbodlela zepulasitiki ezincibilikileyo, lamabhokisi atshileyo awezigodo awokuthwala izimbodlela. Ikhawunta, eyayibunjwe ngesamende lezitina, ilokhu imi, ithutsha ngenkani phakathi kwemfucumfucu. Kulithala elikhulu elibanzi okuyimitha eyodwa lapha okuthi amadoda asanda kwehla ebhasini yeKezi-Bulawayo elula khona ingalo zawo. Ngamaphimbo abucayi njalo elenjabulo, achasisa ukubona kwawo injabulo ezayo, uzibuse. Umgcinisitolo, uMahlathini, ubeka izandla zakhe emtshineni wemali njalo kakhangelile phezulu ngitsho, uyahleka, kodwa kaqali ukukhangela phezulu, uyavuma, uyaphikisa, njalo kaqali ukuphakamisa amehlo akhe. Uqhikiza amahlombe akhe, uhloma imali eshelufini edonswayo njalo ayikopele ngaphansi kwethireyi, ufuqela imali yamatshe ebhokisini. Weyama abuyele emuva njalo ahleke ngalokho okukhulunyiweyo. Kafuni ukuthi akhumbule ukuthi ngubani okhulumeni, njalo nini. Kathandi ukuthi azi ukuthi ngubani omuzwe ekhulumani, njalo nini. Uyezwa ukungunguna kwamazwi, iphimbo leli, lokho kuzizwela ngenhliziyo, ukwesaba okukwelinye ilizwi. Amahungahunga, unyeyo, inani lamasotsha abuleweyo, impi. UMahlathini uhlala ekhangelse amehlo akhe phansi njalo iminwe yakhe isemtshineni wemali. Isitolo sesingaselabantu ukhangela phezulu, ekhangela ngomnyango, njalo ubona amadoda elokhu ezulazula. Ubona inina lithengisa amabhasikiti lingaphansi komthunzi wesihlahla somganu, ilanga liletha umoya otshisayo kakhulu.

Loba kunjalo uMahlathini wenelisa ukuphila okwesikhathi eside ok-

waneleyo kwaze kwafika isikhathi sokumiswa kwempi lesikazibuse njalo wabona amadoda ayevela edolobheni elahlekelwa yikuzigqaja kwawo njalo esiwa phansi ngamadolo lapho abesifazana, ababesanda kuphenduka bevela empini bezihambela kalula besiza evurandini lakhe njalo bafike babize imihlanga yegwayi ngamaphimbo alobuvila, abanye bathi Madison, abanye njalo bathi Lucky Strike. Kakho phakathi kwabo owake wabiza i-Everest.

UMahlathini, owayengumgcinisitolo sakoThandabantu okwesikhathi eside usefile. Labo abathi bazi konke okwenzakala kuMahlathini kunye ngakunye bathi imigodla yepulasitiki eyempuphu yeRoller yalunyathiswa, njalo yayekelwa yathontela phezu kwakhe kancane kancane isikhumba sakhe saze saphihlika kusukela emadolweni akhe kusiya fika enweleni, ingqondo yakhe yaze yathi wohlo, yahlubeka, wabulawa yibuhlungu obabuselizwini lakhe. Wayevele esefile ngesikhathi bembophela emadiroweni bethela iphethulo phezu kwempahla lamalembu athengiswayo njalo lesidumbu sithe daca phansi, hatshi, izidumbu, ngoba amasotsha ayefike koThandabantu ilanga selitshona athola amadoda akuleyo ndawo edlula amatshumi amabili ekhonapho, njalo labantwana ababethenga amakhandlela, lamakhehla okwakufanele ukuthi ngabe asedwaleni lendulo Umthethelo ezifela ngokuthula khonale kodwa akhetha le ingxubevange koThandabantu ngakho-ke ayesiyakhona usuku lunye ngalunye, bonke laba. Amasotsha abadubula, engabaphanga isizatho - angena njalo aphakamisa imibhobho ye-AK: lonke uhlamvu olwaphumayo lwalubulala.

UMahlathini. Bahlanekela iqiniso ngokufa kwakhe, bemethesa icala lokutholisa indawo yokuhlanganyela lapha okwakungakhulunyelwa khona yiloba yini, kuhlelwe amaqhinga, njalo kuvunyelwe ukuthi enzeke. Kuthiwa wayeyingcitshi yokulahlela khatshana konke okwesikhathi esizayo. UMahlathini kazange athole isikhathi sokuthi aphikise, khona kazange vele anxuswe ukuthi akwenze. Amasotsha abika ukuthi ayemazi, emkhumbula ngesikhathi sokumiswa kwempi lapha iNkamba yokuButhanela eyeSondela yayimi khona esihotsheni.

Kazange akhumbule na ukuthi enye yezinkamba zokumiswa kwempi yayiphambi kwesitolo sakhe ngomnyaka ka1980? Khonapha phezu kwebunzi lakhe? Azi zonke intethe labo bonke utshani lapha eKezi; ayamazi. Wona ngokwawo ayekholwa ukuthi kwakungelalutho uMahlathini ayengalwengeza kumbe ukuluphika mayelana lalokho wona ayekukholwa ukuthi yizenzo zakhe zakhathesi.

UMahlathini kazange akhangele endodeni, embhobheni, kumbe elizwini. Wakhangela phansi njalo wakwemukela ukuthi kase-lakuphinda abone abantwabakhe futhi. Kazange athande ukubona ukuthi ngubani owayembulala, funa akhumbule okunye mayelana lamehlo, ngebunzi, lokuhamba kwendoda le. Waxwaya ukubhekana lakho, phambi kwamehlo akhe, ukuhlanyukelwa okunjeyana. Wayengafuni ukubona okunye okwedlula lokho loba kambe wayekuzwisisa ukuthi lokhu kwakungelani lomkhumbulo: babezambulala njalo bakutsho lokho ngasikhathi sinye besenzanjalo: kwakungelangozi ngaye eyokukhumbula yiloba yini, eyokukhuluma ephikisana lesotsha leli. Akutholayo ngokulangazela wakhe uzibuse kwamethusa; amasotsha amanengi ayesekhulusini lomnyango, imizimba yawo yendlelekile njengefulegi entsha ngaphansi kophahla lwakhe.

Ukufa kukaMahlathini kakusoze kubhaliswe. Akulamkhumbulo ozafiswa ngakho. Kwakuyisikhathi esinjalo; ukufa okunjalo. Kazange aphikise ukwetheswa kwakhe amacala ayekwazi ukuthi ngamanga. Ingqondo yakhe yayigijima njengomoya isedlula imibhobho lomsebenzi wangabomo owamasotsha la, isedlula impi yenkululeko leminyaka yayo njalo leminyaka yethemba leyo, eyayiseluleka isuka evurandini lesitolo sakhe isiyafika emaqaqeni eGulati, ngemva kwalokho kuphela kulapho iminyaka eyeluleka khona isiyafika ezindaweni ezitshiyeneyo zelizwe ayengasoze aphile ukuze azibone kumbe acabange ngazo, lapho lakhona impi eyayilwiwe khona; yagijima, yedlula isikhathi sokumiswa kwempi, ubuhle lamandla omkhosi wokuthakazelela uzibuse, ukukholwa, okwakukhangelelwe, ubuhle, yagijima yedlula ukufa kwakhe yena ngokwakhe ingqondo yakhe yaze yema ukubhoda lokuphenduka, kodwa isikhamisile. Isiyehlukene.

Isithule. Isifile ngobuhlungu emzimbeni wakhe, incibilika. Wayengasanelisi ukuzwa amazwi, ukudubula kombhobho, lokuxokozela phakathi kwesitolo sakhe. Konke ayekwazi ukuthi kuyenzakala kwakhanya kuthatha isikhathi eside kakhulu. Okwakukhanya njalo kusobala yikuthi wayengaqakathekanga. Yayiyini indawo okuthiwa yiKezi lapho iqathaniswa lobukhunkuli bezimiso zala amadoda? Wayengubani uMahlathini? Wayengumgcinisitolo kuphela nje ababengamhlinza ephila njalo bamlahle.

Wazizwa ingqondo zala amadoda elungiselela ukumbulala. Ekuqaleni, adubula imbala yakhe. Esephansi kulapho adabula khona izigqoko zakhe njalo alumathisa imigodla yamapulasitiki. Abenga imigodla engelalutho eyempuphu yomumbu ayithatha esitolo njalo asebenzisa yona ukumehlukanisa lesikhumba sakhe. Amasotsha atshelela emsulwa phakathi kweziduli zempuphu emhlophe eyomumbu laphezu kwemizimba engaselampilo laphezu kwegazi. Ngengalo ezazigcwele impuphu lamajambo aconjwe ngempuphu, alengisa imigodla yepulasitiki ensimbini zokulengisa impahla lapho ayesuse khona amayunifomu abantwana. Ambopha. Sekunjalo ehlisela phezulu kwakhe inhlanguanisela ebhebhayo. Phezu kwakhe. Amasotsha agxila kulesi senzo ngamandla langolaka, ubuso bawo bungatshengisi lutho lapha ebenga amapulasitiki elandelana, evumela ukuthi ilangabi elingamanzi lithonte, lapha elumathisa indawo, etshelela engena phakathi kotshani obufika emahlombe, ubusuku bungela ngitsho lankanyezi eyodwa. Engakathintithi impuphu engalweni zawo ayevele esekhohliwe ngoMahlathini langesiduli somlilo ayesitshiye ngemuva.

Labo ababona lokho okwenzakala koThandabantu ngalobu busuku bathi uMahlathini wahlaba umkhulungwane njengenyamazana esiphelelwe yikho konke. Kwathi lapho umsindo udeda, isikhumba sakhe sesivele sibhobokile njengeleyisi. Bevele bengakatshisi isitolo, wayesefe kudala. Okwalandela ukukhala kombhobho, lokuzwiswa ubuhlungu, yingxubevange yemisindo eyabaneka ubusuku ngokudubuka kwayo. Ukunuka kwenyama etshileyo kwagcwala emoyeni njalo sekwahlala engqondweni zezakhamizi zeKezi

kokuphela. Ngalobu busuku okwatshiswa ngabo isitolo sakoThandabantu abantwana ababekhutshwa emabeleni kwadingeka ukuthi baqhubeke bemunya okwesikhathi eside ukwenzela ukuthi onina basinde kulokho okwasekwenzakele, bencediswa yikuthintwa ngothando olufudumalayo olwengqondo ezingaboniyo ezenzalo yabo. Isitolo sakoThandabantu sabhidlizwa saba yizicucu, sabhonjwa, njalo sathuliswa. Uma kulezidumbu ngaphansi kwemfuqumfuqu kakho olinga ukuya kuleyo ndawo, ukuyasusa ilitshelane linye ngalinye lezitina ezifileyo, njalo abale amathambo, linye ngalinye, ukuthi azi ukuthi lokhu lalokho kuyini; ukuthi yiwaphi amathambo omgogodla enza ukuthi indoda ime.

Amanye amadoda angabonakaliyo lapha emakhaya kuthiwa kusobala ukuthi afela khonaphayana, amanye njalo kuthiwa, ahamba ummango wonke ukusuka eKezi esiyafika koBulawayo, ngabonalobo busuku bunye, enelise ukuphunyuka, ehamba ethwele umkhumbulo womzimba otshayo kanye lelangabi elingelachatha, ezwisisa okwedlula yiloba ngubani omunye ukuthi iKezi yayisezamelana lesikhathi esesabisayo njalo esingasihle, lokuthi yiloba yikuphi okunye okwakungenzakala kwakuzabhidliza konke, njalo kungokokucina. Labo abasebevele sebone ikusasa bakufica kuyibuthutha ukuthi bahlale. Babebalekela iqiniso okwasekukade bahlangana lalo. Iqembu lama-sotsha elalibuthane esitolo sakoThandabantu laselikutshengisile ukuthi yiloba yini eyayisiyenzakele kuze kube yilesi sikhathi yayingazenzakalelanga nje yodwa kumbe yenzakale ingahlelwanga. Ububi obesabekayo, yebo, kodwa kulenjongo. Benza ububi engathi balandela into esemthethweni, umthethelo wamacala abo. Isehlakalo sinye ngasinye sasiqonde ukwethusa, ukwelapha ingqondo zobuntwana. Ingqondo, eyayingamelanga ukuthi iphephe kukho, ikulandise futhi, kodwa okwakumele ife. Ayabaleka, lawo madoda abona iThandabantu isitsha. Abalekela ukudikiza okusezingqondweni zawo.

Abanye bayaphikelela besithi kakho owabaleka waya koBulawayo ngalobo busuku kodwa amanye amadoda abanjwa ngamandla ahanjwa lawo okwamakhilomitha amanengi khatshana leKezi, adonswa kwed-

lulwa amaqqa eGulati, bangena lawo phakathi ezinkambeni okwakuvallelwe khona abanye abanengi, bazwiswa ubuhlungu, babulawa bangcwatshwa thuna linye. Umgwaqo oya eKezi usuyingozi khathesi. Omaquphula. Izindawo lapho elimiswa lihlohlwa. Imibhobho. Ibhasi, uma ike yavunyelwa ukuthi isuke enzikini yedolobho lakoBulawayo, iyamiswa njalo ihlolwe sonke isikhathi ngemva kokuhamba amakhilomitha amahlanu ize iyefika eKezi kulokhu kusenziwa lokho, uma ifikile eKezi. Izihambi ziyahlutshulwa izigqoko zisale zinqunu njalo yonke into eziyithweleyo iyathintithwa isale ingaselalutho, isikhwama sinye ngasinye siyahlolwa. Labo abatholakala benge-lazithupha zesizwe bacelewa ukuthi basale abanye behamba, besala lamasotsha. Bayaqhutshwa kuqondwe labo eguswini njalo baginywe butshani obude, utshani bendlovu, njalo batshelwa ukuthi bacambalale phansi amasotsha aze alunge. Bawa bacambalale phakathi kwezihlahla, etshanini obunyikinyekayo, ngokulalela bengaphikisi. Nxa ibhasi imiswa, akucaci kuzihambi ukuthi amasotsha la eqa esedlula umtshayeli ngobani, ukuthi ajongeni; ukuthi ajonge ukwethusela, ukubulala, ukuthi athole ulwazi, kumbe ukuvusa abafuleyo. IKezi igonjolozelwe ngamasotsha ahamba ngokuphangisa; ingqondo zawo zisabalele.

ISAHLUKO SETSHUMI LANE

UNONCEBA UBONA UKUMA kwesihlalo ngemuva kombheda. Iwadirobhu itshone phakathi kokukhanya okuphansi. Uyavuka. Umqamelo umanzi. Isandla sinqume phezu kwebunzi lakhe. Uhlikihlala ubuso bakhe emqamelweni. Uyaphenduka. Uhloma izandla zakhe ngaphansi komqamelo. Ube esephutsheni okungela ngitsho usaba lokukhanya kulo. Kuleli phupho, uhambisa izandla zakhe phezu kolutho lunye ngalunye, imithambo yakhe iyadikiza itshayana lomnyama. Umi phezu kwethala eliphakemeyo. Ingalo zakhe zichayekile. Ngaphansi kwakhe kulengadi yamaluba eganga. Kagqokanga njalo uyaqhuqha emqandweni. Uzakuwa enqunu ewela phakathi kwensimu yamaluba. Abomvu.

UNonceba uyasukuma embhedeni. Inyawo zakhe kaziqinanga. Uyaphumula. Ikhettheni liyaphakama. Insaba zokukhanya ziwela phezu kwesihlalo esingelalutho. Ngaphansi kwewindi. Uyasukuma. Umbheda kawukhali. Ulula, ulusiba. Uvele wayelomzimba omncinyane. Njengokhunyanana, uThenjiwe wayesitshonjalo. Kumele ahlele kuhle imicabango yakhe. Wehlisa isigqoko selembu elenziwe ngotshinda. Ikhalikho. Asilamkhono. Ubophela amabhanti la axegayo ekhalweni lwakhe. Isigqoko siwela emadolweni akhe. Amanzi; udaka. Kumele akukhumbule konke. Udinga amasandali. Ukhona owabeke kuhle ngaphansi kombheda. Ungenisa ingalo ngaphansi kombheda. Uqinile okwaneleyo nje, loba elesiyezi, etshilwa. Sekumele aphumule, njalo

enze munye ngamunye wemisebenzi yakhe ngonanzelelo, ephendula intamo yakhe ngesineke. Uhlala phezu kombheda njalo ahlome inyawo zakhe phakathi kwamasandali, abuye adonse inzwezwe ziqume unyawo lunye ngalunye, njalo abophe kuqine. Uke watshisa umzimba, kodwa wanelisile ukwedlula kukho. Uvula umnyango, aphume phandle. Ungena emoyeni ngamahlombe akhe. Umoya uyaqanda. Ubuyela phakathi endlini njalo avule isikhwama esiseceleni kwewadirobhu. Kulombhalo phezu kwaso, ngependa emhlophe, obetha igama lakhe, Nonceba Gumede. UThenjiwe wambhalela lokho ngesikhathi esuka esiya esikolo sebhodini. Izinyanga ezintathu zonke behlukene. Besekulandela ikhefu elifitshane elokuvalwa kwezikolo. Sebebuyela esikolo futhi. Isikhwama silethwa phandle, izigqoko ziqoqwe kuhle ngonanzelelo. Weyamisa isivalo saso emdulini. 'Ubaba wethu wayengumphathisikolo wesikolo esemfundo ephansi eseSobantu. Ungamyangisi. Uqhube kuhle esikolo, ngalokho imicabango yakho ingakhululeka.' Phakathi kwesikhwama, kulejesi eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka. Yijesi kaThenjiwe. Imikhono yayo mide kakhulu kuye. Uhloma ingalo zakhe eceleni kwengalo zikaThenjiwe, eduze laye, esizwa ukufudumala kubuthana eminweni yakhe, njengento ongayibamba, njengokuphefumula. Iwulu eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka, ukweluka okuhle ngaphambili, iwulu yelukwe yelekana, kungena phakathi kuphume phandle. UNonceba uhambisa iminwe yakhe phezu kwewulu ebuthakathaka. Usondeza amabheqe ayo ewaqondisa emzimbeni wakhe adonsele umoya phakathi, awuhwebe, eqoqa ukukhanya: ukukhanya. Ugoqa ubude bayo phezu kwezihlakala zakhe. Ukopela ijesi kancane kancane, kancane kancane, ukwenza kwakhe kunye ngakunye kumenza aqine ngamandla. Ukopela ijesi yonke, esehla esiyafika phansi. Uvala isikhwama. UNonceba Gumede. Yena ngokwakhe. Abe esephuma ekamelweni. Uhleko lugcwala ikamelo lonke. Ulibale ukupakitsha ikama yakhe. Utshela uThenjiwe. Isikhwama siyavulwa futhi. Siyavalwa, sibe sesikhiywa. UNonceba uphuma ekamelweni njalo, aye phandle emoyeni ongabanekwanga, ongelambala. Umoya uthulisile njengamanzi. Ulesikhudumezi esi-

fomisa umzimba. Ukhangela khatshana le edinga ngamehlo. Kulom-
sindo omlutshwane phandle ngaphandle kokutshaya kwenhliziyo
yakhe. Umhlabathi uyagenquka. Uyaguquka. Usezizwa elula nje.

Inkundu igombolozele isibhakabhaka. Amaqaqa ayabhidlika. Isib-
hakabhaka siyinto engamanzi ayimpunga eluhlaza elenga emoyeni.
Lokhu uyakuthakazelela, hatshi lesiyana isibhakabhaka esehlukeneyo
esikhatshana le emkhumbulweni wakhe, siluhlaza cwe, sithe cwe njalo
siluhlaza, siseduze, asikhumbulayo. Inkundu yehlela ematsheni eGu-
lati, njalo yenza ubulukhuni bawo bubebuthakathaka: athambile,
ayabumbeka, kawaqinanga. Idwala liyacatsha, liyaguquka, liyancibi-
lika. UNonceba ubuka ilitshe lincibilika njengetswayi. Amatshe
ayaguquka abe ngamanzi lesibhakabhaka njalo ayaphakama lapha
inkundu iphakama, izamazame, njalo isehla. Amatshe ayatshabalala,
esebutshelezi, awasekho lapha, hatshi laphayana, awasemnyama,
awasekho. Asehambile. Aselahlekelwe yibunzima bawo, ukusinda
kwawo. Ayabucuzeka engena emoyeni. Kaseyiwo amathunzi am-
nyama. Kaseyiwo abantu ababazwe ngamatshe. Kaseyiwo imifanekiso
yezinto. Kawasela simo, kawasafani lezinto ezilesimo ezingathintwa.
Akusela maqaqa, akusela matshe, le khatshana. Kawaselutho. Yonke
into isimunyiwe, yaginywa, asebe lubhalu. Inkundu ivimbile, isabal-
ala yonke indawo ngokuthanda, imsulwa njalo icolekile, njengemput-
shana ethululelwa phansi okomfasimbi oxhophayo, imvuthu zilenga
emoyeni. Sekulandela ukungaboni. Amehlo akhe engaboni. Kungela-
lutho phakathi kwakhe lomkhathi. Umoya ongelalutho. Amatshe en-
gasabonakali. Akulamazwi okuchasisa ukungabi lasimo kwawo,
kumbe ukuma kwawo. Sekucinile ukubakhona kwawo. Akulamazwi.
Akulalutho. Akulamazwi okuchasisa ukungabikhona kwalokhu.
Khonokho nje thutshu olunye ulutho olubukhali. Umcijo. Kuvela
amaphethelo. Kulokho uba lombono wemkhizo yezulu elina lilula.
Khatshana le. Mhlawumbe kulomoya ovunguza ngamandla amakhulu
khonale lakho. Ubona insaba eziyimpunga, insaba zokukhanya
zisehla, njalo lethunzi. Inkundu iza ngakuye ingamagagasi njengom-
bule: ilembu elikhanya ngale kwalo, ilembu elisikasikiweyo, umkhathi

onjengeleyisi. Okwesikhatshana nje ubona isimo esipheleleyo sivela. Siyacatsha. Ukuma kwelitshe kuhlangebezana lelihlo. Lakho kuyanyamalala. Kuyale lale. Amaqaqa ayahlabela. Lokhu yikukhanya, kubhoboza umkhathi, kubumba amatshe kungathi libumba. Amatshe alalela ukukhanya okuyikho okuwapha isimo, ukuma kwawo, ubukhona, umbala. Made. Abanzi. Abanzi okwedlulisileyo. Ukukhanya kuyakhula njalo kwembule amatshe. Manengi, ingxubevange yamatshe. Abumbekile njalo ajamile. Ingqongo ezingena emanzini. Ukukhanya kuthintitha inkungu. Inkungu iyaphephetheka isuka ematsheni njengothuli olumhlophe. Ukukhanya okubukhali, kuqondile njalo kunciphile, njengezicucu zengilazi kusehlela phansi. Kutshaya umkhathi. Ngamandla amakhulu. Inkungu isiphele nya emehlweni akhe. Umngcele omnyama uyavela khatshana le, masinya, kulokufanelana. Izihlahla lamatshe agqitshelweyo kuthola isimo kuphuma phansi emhlabathini kusiya phezulu. Iphansi liyaqhela. Amatshe ayakhukhumala. Ilitshe lihlala phezu kwelinye, liwa lisuka kwelinye, lilenga kwelinye, enye ingxenye yelitshe ilenga emoyeni ongelalutho, selilolongeke laba yisigombolozu, lingawi ngitsho. Lilindele nje qha. Njengaye, uNonceba, lingazunguzeki. Ulindele ezithulele. Ukuthula: yindawo enhle yokuhlala, umsindo omuhle kumizwa. Angaphila ngalokhu kuthula okusuka ematsheni. Uyenelisa ukuzwa igazi lakhe lihamba, litshaya, lisuka komunye umthambo lisiya komunye, ngesiqubu. Uthule njengenhlozi, ebuka ukuguquka kwesibhakabhaka. Uyedwa, engakhali. Ubuhlungu bakhe bude okwedlula amaqqa. Lokhu uyakwazi. Usizi lwakhe. Uyalwamukela. Ukukhanya okuphakathi kobumnyama lobuhlaza kudabula umkhathi, njengento ekhula kancane idala ubuphofu. Kulobuluhlaza besibhakabhaka obumnyama tshu. Lapha insaba zelanga ezilithanga zihlangana, zisakazeka butshapha ziquma isibhakabhaka. Izinyoni zidabula phakathi komoya ojiyileyo, kuphuma umsindo omnandi owezimpiko: ukudalwa kuyenzeka kanengi njalo kubonakala.

UNonceba uphakamisa ingalo yakhe yesokudla eyiqondisa ebusweni

bakhe. Kancane, kancane, uzinyomula amasandali akhe, ahambe en-
gafakanga lutho enyaweni, eqonde endlini.

ISAHLUKO SETSHUMI LANHLANU

NGIFUNA UKUFAKA INGQONDO yami engozini, ukungeniswa ezenzweni zami sengithethe isinqumo mina ngokwami esilwisana lokulimala kwami. Impi enje. Ngithola usekelo eqinisweni linye ngalinye, kokunye lokunye okungasiqiniso.

Ngiyanga futhi eguswini. Ngiyabuyela ebhalwini loqaqa, lwelitshe, lwesibhakabhaka. Ngiyabuyela futhi esikhathini samaqaqa esadlulayo. Umhlaba ungaphansi kwezinyawo zami. Ngiwela phakathi kokutshisa okomileyo okomoya lotshani; okwelitshe, okwesibhakabhaka. Akukho phakathi kwakho okuyindawo yokuphumulela. Ngimelana lempi. Ngiludlawu lwempi. Ngilahlekelwa ngumbono wesihe, esiza kimi ngokwami.

Ngesikhathi sokumiswa kwempi ngihlala lamasotsha azinkulungwane ezine enkambeni eyodwa. Ngiyenelisa ukubona umahluko phakathi kwendoda yinye ngayinye, ukubona elokwesaba okukhulu okwedlula bonke. Izinkulungwane ezine zamasotsha, izikhali zawo ziphansi. Kangibeki phansi izikhali. Kangilwi ukuze ngithabise omunye. Sengigebhe igodi njalo ngalivala ngotshani. Ngihlala phakathi kwalo kodwa kungathatha isikhathi eside kangakanani ukuthi indoda iqhubeke igqitshelwe ingakaphenduki ibe yisiphofu?

Eguswini kakho omunye olamandla ongaphezulu kwami ngaphandle kwesibhakabhaka esinqunu. Okuvikelayo okuphezu kweminwe yami:

ukufa. Ngaphansi kwenyawo zami, ngumlotha. Akulalutho olusinda emlilweni, ngitsho lamazwi abafayo. Akulalutho olusinda emlilweni ngaphandle kwelitshe.

Utshani bomile njalo buyaqamuka. Kulemifula, izifudlana azikho. Izikhali ezifihliweyo, zivikelekile. Ngigijima ngize ngitshe, ngiqonde eGulati, kuleya indawo yokucatsha, ubhalu lweMbelele. Ngiwela ebhalwini lapho engifika khona njalo, imibiko yabafayo, ilumathiswa iphile ngomlilo osuka eminweni yami. Utshani obomileyo butshaya buquma phezu kwengalo zami, buzisika. Ngigijima phakathi kotshani obuphakama phambi kwami njengomduli, buvala ukubona, kodwa ngiyakwazi lapha engiqonde khona loba ngingakhangelanga phezulu, ngiyenelisa ukuya lapha engifuna khona, sengahlala lapha, ngithunjwe ngamaqaqa, ngingelalutho ngaphandle komphefumulo wami; umhlabathi usuphongusuka wabamkhulu okwedlula isibhakabhaka. Ngigijima umnyama uze wehle njalo okuzwakalayo kuphela ngum-sindo owotshani butshaya phezu kwesikhumba sami njengomoya omkhulu; um-sindo omnyama njengobusuku, ubambeka.

Ubusuku. Umoya uqanda okumnandi. Ngiwusebenzisa ukuqansa amaqqa. Ngiaqhubeka kuze kuvele ucezu lwenyanga njalo luveze ukuma kwamaqaqa, ukuma kowesifazana, ephelele, ngaphezu kwamatshe. Into enganyikinyekiyo, owesifazana owenziwe ngelitshe. Ilitshe leli liseduze leMbelele. Ngilazi kuhle. Ngingasaboni ngenxa yomnyama ngigijima phakathi kwamaqaqa ngiqonde ilitshe leli elimi lodwa eliqonge phezulu esibhakabhakeni. Owesifazana umi phezulu kwedwala, elilelinye icele elendlalekileyo, ngaphezulu, kulelinye ilitshe, elincinyane kulaleli, ngaphezulu kwaleliyana, ilitshe eliyisigomboloz, likhulu njalo lendlalekile - inina lamaqaqa. Lilodwa. Mina ngiseduze kwelitshe leliya amadolo ami egedezela, ingqondo yami ibhoda, njalo ngiyazi ukuthi kusasa ngizanyamalala ngedwa kwenye indawo khonapha emaqaqeni la. Kangiphefumuli. Ngiginya umoya. Ngizawohloka njengento eyomileyo. Kumele ngifinyelele kuleya into emi ngaphansi kwenyanga ngaphezu kwendawo yokukhonzela, iM-

belele, lapha engagqibela khona hatshi izikhali zami kuphela, kodwa lendoda. Ngamngcwaba emanzini, phakathi kobhalu, elimele. Wayengeke aphile. Ngabeka ilitshe phezu kwakhe njalo walala enganyikinyeki. Amanzi kuleyana indawo yokukhonzela kawacitshi ngitsho. Ahlala ekhona kokuphela njengelitshe. Isithunzi sami siwela phezu kotshani, umzimba wami uqansa ilitshe, ingxenye yelitshe, ukuyadinga amanzi, amanzi eneleyo angangcwaba indoda.

Ngibuyela emuva emaqaqeni eGulati.

Lami futhi ngavela ngaphansi komhlaba, ngasitshunwa, njengamatshu.

IKezi.

ISAPHLUKO SETSHUMI LESITHUPHA

KUSEMINI ENKULU. IZITHELO ZAMAGANU zimemetheka zingena emoyeni, zifafaze amakha oqhatshi ekukhanyeni okuhle kwemini, njalo kusanganise imizwa. UNonceba usengaphakamisa ingalo yakhe aphefumule emaganwini, umoya omuhle olamakha ophezu kwakhe. Uhotsha umoya othuleyo njalo odakayo oloqhatshi lwesihlahla lesi, njalo uvala amehlo akhe ukuze asibone, uwavala okwaneleyo okokuthi uyanelisa ukuvimba ingqondo yakhe kulokho okungemuva kwesihlahla, lokho okwasalayo okwesitolo sakoThandabantu okukhathesi sesagqitshelwa, kasisekho, sabhidlizwa njalo sesahamba. Kasizake sibelapho. Isihlahla somganu sisodwa emayezini, izingatsha eziphezulu ziyalenga ngezithelo, ziyenda zilithanga zisiya emhlabathini. Izithelo ziwela phansi. Izikhumba zezithelo ziyakhukhumala ngenxa yokutshisa, zibe sezidabuka, ubunandi buchitheke. Intanga ezinkulu ezitshelelayo zitshelela ziphume. Uqhatshi lomhluzi luyasabalala njalo lukhwele lokutshisa kosuku, njalo luphephetheke lomoyana obakhona. Amakha akuyo yonke indawo, angena phakathi kwelinye lelinye iphupho, kusinqumo sinye ngasinye. Ilanga liyahlaba lithe kla, litshaya limsulwa njalo lisehlela phansi litshisa okwaneleyo okokuthi wonke umuntu uthi lamuhla lizakuna, kodwa into kuphela enayo yintuthu yamaganu, ibalaza lonke iphupho kusukela ekuseni kusiyafika emini, lize liyetshona.

Umthunzi wesihlahla somphafa lapha uOnceba ahlezi khona yisih-

lenge somoya oqanda mnandi ovusa umzimba, ekuvikeleni kwawo ukutshisa, kuhle kome emakhwapheeni lezmimbini wonke khonokho nje; kodwa yikutshisa kuphela okusukayo kuye, hatshi uqhatshi lwamaganu, olunamathela kuye, olunamathela kuyo yonke into; olungumoya ngokwawo. Ekulo umthunzi othuleyo ilihlo lenelisa ukubona imifanekiso phakathi komoya otshisayo iphakama njalo isenza ukubonakala kwamaqaqa kweluleke, amajankalajimu. Amasimu alinyiweyo ameleleyo eluleka esiyale njalo alima ummango, emelele izulu elingekho, elingekho okwesikhathi eside, ngasikhathi sinye amasimu edabula amadwala njalo izindlu zisenza izigombolozilezigombolozile. Amanzi kawakho okokuthi uyanelisa ukunambitha amathonsi awo elimini lwakho. Akulasilimo esikhulayo. Utshani bome qha, buyaqamuka njalo buyacezuka, sebulungele ukutsha. Utshani bubumba umngcele wakho konke okubonakalayo, bulandela indledlana, bugeleza, buhamba ngomdumo omnandi, bomile bubomvana, emaceleni omgwaqo. Ilihlo lehla phezu kotshani obutshona bukhwela, ukutshisa kutshone phakathi kwabo kancane kancane njengamanzi abilayo njalo lowo okhangelayo aze anyikinyeke esiyale lale, hatshi utshani, lokho yikho okuqalayo, njalo sekunjalo ilihlo selingaphumula phezu kwamaqaqa, phezu kwelitshe kumbe phezu kwendoda.

Ehlezi ngaphansi komthunzi wesihlahla somphafa elalele amathunzi alamakha lokubiza kwamajuba okulolozelayo uNonceba ubona indoda ithutsha emkhathini okhatshana le, izungeza ilandela indlela yenyawo ilenjongo, kwesenxele kwesokudla, ibuyele kwesenxele, indledlana iyaphothana njengesiswebhu, ibhodabhoda. Iza ngapha. Ihamba ngendlela eqonda endlini. Utshani, obufika emahlombe kuye, bufika ekhalweni kuphela kuyo. Iyasondela eduze kodwa ilokhu ikhatshana kakhulu, ukuma kwayo ngamanxeba, into ecatsheziweyo, encibilikayo. Isiseduze njalo usengayibona, akuseyisimo esincibilikayo ekukhanyeni okulamandla, kodwa isimo esithe kla. Ihlangene, iqhubeka, inganyikinyeki. Ithutsha ekukhanyeni okumi kodwa. Yinde, ihlanganisa ndawonye ilitshe lesibhakabhaka, utshani lendlela, njalo isiletha konke lokho ekumangaleni kwakhe. Kuqala ibe iyindawo

ethuleyo kulokhu kutshisa okukhulu, sekunjalo umzimba wayo usuhamba unciphile njengomtshoko, ngecele, unkanyazela usiza kuye, ibhatshi layo liphephezela ngenxa yokuhamba kwayo, libhakuza, lisiza kuye lingelamsindo, indoda ethwele ingowane, indoda egqoke ibhatshi phakathi kokutshisa okungaka, iphethe isikhwama esincinyane esikhumba isigaxe emahlombe ayo, igonjolozelwe ngamaluba ehayibhisikasi. Ngiyayazi indoda le, uNonceba uyacabanga. Ngiyayazi indoda le kanye laleso isixuku sehayibhisikasi esihamba eceleni kwayo. Lapha ilokhu isondela eduze kuba lula ukubona ihayibhisikasi, kuba nzima ukuqhubeka egxilise amehlo akhe kuyo, njalo uvumela ukuthi lokhuya kutshisa okukhatshana kumginye enjalo. Umelana lento eyisimanga. Ihayibhisikasi uyibona kuhle, iqhakazile njalo ilamahlamvu, egcwele ebomvu ngaphansi kwewindi. Ingaphezulu yehayibhisikasi iphezulu kakhulu, kenelisi ukuyibona elapha alele khona, ngitsho lesibhakabhaka esendlaleke ngaphezulu kwayo kasiboni, akwaziyo yikuthi singaphezulu kwayo khatshana lamehlo akhe. Indoda ihamba isedlula amehlo akhe njalo inyamalala ngale kwaleya ndawo ekhatshana kulalapha ukwenzela ukuthi abe endaweni ezimbili ngasikhathi sinye njalo ingqondo yakhe iyabhoda ngomcabango wayo ongeke wenzeka. Ingumuntu ongaziwayo, kodwa sewake wayibona ngaphambili, ibonakala kuhle njengoba ebone ihayibhisikasi, amaluba ayo amakhulu evuleke akhamisa njalo elomnyombo olithanga phakathi, lenyosi zikuwo. Kubonakala kuhle njengoba sewabona ukukhanya kokusa.

UNonceba uyaphakama esuka ekuqandeni okumnandi esiya ekukhanyeni. Imibala yakhe kayenelisi ukuthwala umzimba wakhe ocikizekileyo. Ulula, umangele, kalaqiniso lemizwa yakhe, ukwenelisa kwakhe ukubekezela, ukuthatha yiloba yini eyakhe eseyedlulayo ayimise phambi kwamehlo akhe, loba ikusiphi isimo. Uphakamisa amehlo akhe ewasusa ngaphansi kwalowaya mmango. Inhliziyo yakhe itshaya ilokwesaba angeke akuqamba. Khatshana le, okuthutsha khona ukubonakala kwayo, ivele isiyethule ingowane yayo njalo ngengalo ekhululekileyo iyiyekela ilenge isedlula amadolo ayo, itshelela et-

shanini isedlula kubo, kancane, ukuhamba kwayo kwangabomo njalo kweluliwe, ikhuluma, ijulisa ingqondo. Ingqondo yakhe idingisisa ngokuhamba kwayo konke ekwenzayo. Uyananzelela isenzo sayo sinye ngasinye, ingowane ihamba isiyaphansi njalo isehla phezu kotshani, ikakhulu lokho. Ingalo yayo izinzile njalo ikhululekile. Ingalo yayo ilandela ukuhamba kwengqondo yayo; uNnonceba unanzelela kunye ngakunye ukuhamba kwayo, kancane kancane, okwenziwa ngenjongo. Ubuka ukuhamba kwayo ingathi iyinyoni esesibhakabhakeni. Isiphose yafika ezinyaweni zakhe lapha ecina isikhangele phezu, njalo ihlangabezane lokugolozela kwakhe. Imi phambi kwakhe, ingelamazwi. Nguye oseymangalisile ngokubakhona kwakhe khonokho nje. Ithutsha ivela endaweni eyimfihlo.

UNnonceba ubelokhu ehamba eqonda kuyo, ingqondo yakhe ingakhethi phakathi kokuhamba eqonda kuyo lokuma ndawonye, kodwa isikhathi siyamfuqa lapha ezama ukwehlukanisa indoda le lamaluba ehayibhisikasi njalo ayiphe ibizo, izwi, ayisuse emandleni amaganu njalo lomkhumbulo wakhe odlala umacatshelana laye. Izinyawo zakhe zizihambela zodwa njalo kananzeleli lokuhamba kwakhe, usuka nje azihambe ngokwemvelo njalo ehamba esebuthongweni. Uphefumula kalukhuni ngasikhathi sinye ubukhona bale indoda bumehlukanisa lomthunzi othuleyo oqanda kamnandi njalo kumusa phakathi kokukhanya okuzunguzekayo kuphandla, imthathela ukubayedwa kwakhe. Uyema ethule enganyikinyeki njalo ebeke ingalo yakhe esigodweni esisentubeni yomuzi, ezimisile emangele. Uyakwazi sibili lapha ayibona khona, kodwa hatshi ukuthi ingubani njalo lokuthi kungani ikhangela phansi ingakhangelile phezu lapha eya khona, igiya ingowane yayo etshanini emoyeni lowana otshisa engathi ngumkhuhlane, engathi umhlaba uqalisa emadolweni ayo, njalo ube usukhwela, ulandela izifiso zayo lokwahlulela kwayo, usuqonda yiloba kukuyiphi indawo. Uphatheke kakhulu kulokho ekwenzayo yona ngokwayo, umuntu ongaziwayo ethinta utshani obomileyo ngokukhangela okulobuthakathaka okusuka engqondweni yayo, kusiya ekuhambeni kwengalo zayo, njalo okokucina, kuncibilike

kuyefika ekuthinteni okukodwa okwengowane elelembu elibuthakathaka.

Nguye impela kodwa ingqondo yakhe iphikisana lalelo qiniso, iyenqaba okwesikhathi eside ukuvuma isenzo sesihluku esokuphoselwa ngodlakela emuva kuloba yisiphi isikhathi engakabi kulesi isikhathi sokuthula lapha aphumula khona ngaphansi kwesihlahla somphafa eyekela ingqondo yakhe ithululela konke emoyeni oqanda mnandi omgombolozelayo ukwenzela ukuthi enelise ukuphefumula, ethule njalo eyedwa. Nguye, khathesi, njalo ngilaye isikhathi esiphambili kulakhathesi nguye futhi, akusengqondo yakhe iphethe munye ngamunye wemikhumbulo yakhe ithule, ingakhahlanyezwa. Imibala yakhe iyaqhuqha phakathi kokutshisa okukhulu kangaka, njalo umzimba wakhe uyenelisa ukulawula isihlenge sawo sosizi. Ulimi lwakhe, lomile. Lapha ivela, ingalungiselelanga, konke ukuthula akade ekuqoqe kuhle kuphanga kunyamalale. Wayikhohlwa ngemva kokuphenduka kwakhe eKezi njalo esetshiye umbheda wesibhedlela, okuyikho ayefuna ukukukhohlwa, hatshi ukuhlala kulowana umkhumbulo omethekelelayo ungacacanga kodwa amalanga angakhanyi kuhle elandelwa ngamanye amalanga, ukuzonda lobuhlungu, njalo lokuphikelela, okupheleleyo, ukuthula. Lapho kulapha eyayihlale khona imlindile imini yonke ekamelweni lakhe yena ekhangele phandle ngewindi njalo wabona amaluba ehayibhisikasi. Ilapha ihamba iqonda kuye kodwa ngasikhathi sinye uyayisusa emehlweni akhe eyifaka khatshana kulelo kamelo elikhatshana lapha emlinde khona njalo ingamyekeli ahambe, ikamelo elingemuva kwengqondo yakhe ase-donse khona ikhetheni elimnyama njalo linzima, elivalela iliwa, impophoma, njalo uhlala ekhatshana khonale evikelekile. Ilapha, njalo uyenelisa ukuzwa iphunga lekamelo lesibhedlela. Phakathi kwalokhu kunanzelela okwehlulayo, lokuzama ukubona konke ukuhamba kwayo lokunengi okusebhatshini layo njalo lobude bayo lesixuku sehayibhisikasi, uyazibuza ukuthi kungani ilapha sibili, kungaba yikuthi yedlula lapha eKezi kumbe sibili idinga yena, uma kunjalo, ikwaze njani ukuthi imthola ngaphi? Kayinanzanga ukungabi landaba kwakhe njalo

yamlandela ummango wonke ukusuka koBulawayo usiya eKezi, kule indawo lapha amikhona khathesi eyibukele emangala ukwenza kwayo, kodwa njani? Ingubani? Ize njani isuka koBulawayo yona imigwaqo ivaliwe njalo umhlambi wamasotsha uphazamisa ukuthula kwendawo? Kambe ilipholisa, mhlawumbe? Umuntu ongazwisisa ukuganga lengqondo ezigangileyo njalo lesijeziso esiqondileyo esetheswa izolo eselafayo, izolo lakhe; yindoda engenelisa ukugcina lokho os ekusele okomthetho? Kambe lokhu ngumsebenzi oqondene layo? Ngoba kenelisi ukucabanga ukuthi kungaba yikuphi okunye okungenza ukuthi umuntu ongaziwayo amlandele ummango wonke esuka koBulawayo esiyafika eKezi eke walinda imini yonke embhedeni wakhe wesibhedlela emlindile engakhulumi lutho ngitsho ngaphandle kokuba esekuvikeleni iqiniso elithile okumele alivikele ngitsho langomzimba wakhe. Kuyini okunye okungaba khona okungaba yisizatho sokunyathela kwayo lapha eKezi njalo lokulandela kwayo lokhu okungakholekiyo? Uma ngabe yayingacinanga ikhulumile, uma ngabe yayiphenduke yahamba yabuyela emuva phakathi kokutshisa lokhuyana okubhonxulayo ngabe wakholwa sibili ukuthi yayingazange ibelapha ngitsho, ukuthi uyiphuphile ngenxa yeziqetshana zomkhumbulo okukhathesi zihlezi ziyiziqayiqqa engqondweni yakhe ngoba yiyo indlela asephila ngayo khathesi, lengaphakathi yakhe yonke imadabudabu ngakho layo isize ndawonye isuka kuleya nqumbi yezinto ezimadabudabu ekhanda lakhe njalo kungenzeka ukuthi kungahambelani, ingqe yisiphi isikhathi sosuku, njalo kuhlangukane ukuthi kudale isehlakalo esingakholekiyo okwamagama.

‘Ibizo lami nguCephas Dube,’ itshonjalo. Usephosa akholwe ukubakhona kwayo. Ifica amehlo ayo ikhangele elangeni. Iqhuba isandla sayo isiqondise kuye ibingelela, ukwenza kwayo ngokokulinga. Uyaphenduka ayele njalo ahambe kancane eqonda endlini engathi useyikhohliwe. Eyitshiya ngemuva njengesithunzi sakhe. Ezitshela ukuthi kayikho lapho ngitsho. Uzakuthi angafika emnyango aphenduke akhangele emuva, futhi. ‘Ibizo lami nguCephas,’ itshonjalo futhi, phezu kwamahlombe akhe. Imlandele esuka egedini.

Uhamba esedlula isihlahla somphafa njalo uyenelisa ukuzwa ukuqanda mnandi komthunzi phezu kwehlombe lakhe kodwa uyakwazi kumele akhohlwe ngesiqetshana somhlabathi lesiyana esithuleyo njalo anakane ngalo umuntu ongaziwayo ocezula ingqondo yakhe. Uyema, uyamelela, kodwa engekho ngaphansi komthunzi. Uyayimelela engaphansi kokutshisa okuvuthisayo, ekhangele le khatshana. Bobabili bakhokha umoya, ilindele yena ukuthi akhulume. Uzimelele yena ngokwakhe ukuthi akhulume, ekwazi ukuthi layo imelele, ngoba isikhulumile, hatshi kanye, kabili.

‘Angikwazi,’ ucina etshonjalo, engaphenduki ukuthi ayikhangele. Itshiya ibanga elifaneleyo imi ingemuva kwakhe.

‘Ngakutshiyela umbiko ngesikhathi usesibhedlela seMpilo koBulawayo. Kawuzange uwuthole na? Ngatshiya ibizo lami khonale.’

‘Angikwazi ukuthi ungubani,’ uyaphikelela.

Engxenywe umbiko wemukelwa, wedluliswa. Uyakunanzelela. Umzamo wakhe ube ungowokuzehlukanisa lokulahlekelwa kwakhe. Kakhumbuli ukuthi umbiko wathini. Ngempela kalikhumbuli ibizo layo leli esimnika lona khathesi engathi kumele libe yisambulo. Engxenywe ibizo layo liphansi laphayana lingabalwanga, libhalwe ephetshaneni, kwenye indawo endlini. Lingabalwanga.

‘Kukhona lapho esingakhuluma sikhona? Phakathi endlini engxenywe?’

Kayithembi, kodwa ulalela isicelo sayo engathi olunye ulutho elizwini layo lwenza yonke into iqonde, isenzo sobuwula okwamagama, okungeke kwacatshangelwa, ikakhulu kukhangelwa umumo oseKezi, njalo lobuhlungu abe labo yena. UNonceba uyaqhubeka ehamba ethule, esiyaphambili. Ilizwi layo lilobuqotho, kodwa kumele angene layo endlini na? Kangeke aqale ukungena layo endlini. Kodwa uvula umnyango ongena endlini enkulu njalo angene aqonde ekamelweni elincane eliletafula lezihlalo ezimbili. Uyaphenduka akhangele emuva, umsindo wenyawo zayo usuthe pheliyani ngokuphangisa. Isinyamalele. Kayimlandelanga phakathi. Ibe icelile ukungena endlini na?

Kungabe lokho kwakuyingqondo yakhe eyayimbumbela leyo ngxoxo? Isenza ibekhona okweqiniso? Isengqondweni yakhe kuphela. Ubhoda ngale kwetafula abuyele emnyango, elesifiso sokuyithola lapho, ikhona njengokukhanya kwelanga. Ukhangela phandle, njalo aphose atshayane layo. Iyazulazula entubeni ingowane iphethwe ngesandla, ilenga eduze lamadolo ayo. Ukuzethemba kwayo sekunyamalele. Icela imvumo yakhe epheleleyo ingakangeni. Ifuna ukuvuma kwakhe.

‘Uyafisa ukuthi ngingene na?’ iyabuza, ngonanzelelo. Isinanzelele ukuzimisa kwakhe khatshana; ukungayethembi kwakhe.

‘Ungangena.’ Uyaphenduka asuke kuyo.

Iyangena. Idonsa isihlalo yena ethatha ithireyi elamakhandlela eyisusa etafuleni eyibeka etafuleni elincane elisekhoneni lekamelo. Ibasikiti, elemibhida eyomileyo, ukhezo lwesihlahla, lezi zinto lazo uyazisusa. Ususa zonke izinto eziseleyo azise kwelinye icele letafula. Khathesi, sekulendawo yamazwi abo. Uyayikhangela, ibunzi layo limavinqovinqo ngokucabanga okukhulu. Engayithembi ngitsho, ezitshela ukuthi uzayemukela kuphela okwesikhatshana, azwe ekutshoyo. Kasethukanga. Ilokhu yehlukene engqondweni yakhe, umuntu ongaziwayo othuleyo ohlezi ekamelweni lesibhedlela; ithunzi liyaphakama khatshana le likhwela ngendledlana liqonda kuye; indoda ehlezi ingeyaziwayo iphambi kwakhe. Ingubani?

‘Ngiyakukhumbula esibhedlela,’ uyavuma.

‘Ngeza esibhedlela ngizekubona. Ngangikhumbula ukuthi ngingakhuluma lawe ngaleso sikhathi. Ngazama. Kakwenelisekanga. Ngasuka ngatshiya njalo ngasengiquma ukuthi ngingakwethekelela lapha, sekwedlule isikhathi. Sengize ngabuya khathesi.’

‘Ungubani wena?’ uyaqinisa, emangala ngobukhona bayo, ukuphikelela kwayo.

‘Ibizo lami nguCephas Dube. Ngihlala koBulawayo. Sengihlale khona okweminyaka khathesi. Ngisebenza khonale.’

‘Wenelise njani ukufika lapha? Imigwaqo inzima okunye.’ Umelela impendulo yayo engathi izaphakamisa loba ixotshe ukuyesaba kwakhe.

‘Indoda engiyaziyo ibe isiza eKezi ngeroli. Ngicele ukugadiswa. Ibe

lomusa. Ingivumele ukuthi ngize layo. Sihambe kuhle. Idlulele phambili.'

'Kawuzange ube lohlupho ehambeni lwakho?'

'Hatshi. Kasizange sibe lohlupho.'

Kayimtshelanga ukuthi indoda elemota ngubani. Kungani indoda isuke yazimisela ukuhamba ummango wonke isiza eKezi? Akusela-lutho lapha, akuselangitsho lesitolo. IKEzi yindawo yalabo abazalelwa lapha kuphela njalo abangelayo enye indawo lapha abangaya khona. Indawo yababanjiweyo. Amadwala: amanxiwa: imizi etshisiweyo: abafileyo: isibhakabhaka esingelayezi. Abantu abanengi sebatshiya njalo imizi eminengi ikhamisile. Kayichasisi mayelana lale indoda, umtshayeli olinga ubude bomgwaqo lobuyana hatshi njengendlela yokuphunyuka kodwa ukungena nje kule inkangala, iKezi. Kafuni kuyibuza imibuzo esegcekeni kodwa ulwazi elugcinayo ingaluvezi lukhanya luqakathekile kuye. Ibeka ingowane yayo phezu kwetafula, phakathi kwabo. Kayihlalisekanga, kayenelisi ukuthi iqalise ukutsho yiloba yini leyo eyikhokhelele kuye. Uyezwa ukuthi ilolutho efuna ukumtshela lona. Ulutho oluqakathekileyo. Uyayimelela ukuthi ikhulume.

'Ngezwa ngawe kuphela ngesikhathi usebhodini. Usungumbalisi khathesi na?' Imkhangelana idingisisa.

'Ngangingumbalisi ngomnyaka ophelileyo, kodwa lonyaka ngihlezi ekhaya. Isikolo sesavalwa. Abantwana kabasayi esikolo.' Kayikatsho ukuthi ngubani owayitshela ngaye, ukuthi kungani kwakumele yazi ngaye.

'Ngake ngahlala kule indlu, okwezinyanga ezimbalwa,' itshonjalo.

Uyayikhangelisisa kuhle. Kakukho okumfananisa loyise omncinyane uMduduzi kumbe amanye amalunga omndeni wakhe. Uyacabanga ukuthi kambe engabe eyisihlobo sikanina. Kazi ngitsho muntu eceleni likanina. Yonke into ngayo intsha kuye, uleqiniso lakho. Uyisekazi uSihle uzakwedlula lapha masinyane nje ukuze babuyele bonke. UNonceba ucele ukuke asale okwesikhatshana emini, ngoba khathesi usehlala loSihle selokhu waphendukayo evela esibhedlela.

Kodwa-ke kakukasuswa izinto zonke endlini, itafula le, izihlalo lezi, yikhona zizasuswa. Kuyamangalisa ukuthi indoda le ifike ngelinye lalawo malanga lapha ekhethe ukuba lapha.

‘Ngisebenza ewofisini edolobheni. Ngiqoqa imibhalo ngiyibeka ngemfanelo, esiphaleni sokugcinela imibhalo. Ngenye ikuseni ngan-gibambanisa okusikwe kumaphephandaba. Ngabona umfanekiso weKezi kulo. Ngabala mayelana lalokho okwenzakala kuwe loThen-jiwe lapha eKezi. Ngahle ngazi khonokho nje ukuthi kwakumele ngikubone. Ngathola ukuthi wawusesibhedlela. Ngangingakholwa ukuthi uThenjiwe wayesefile kwaze kwaba yilapho sengikubonile njalo ngahlala phakathi kokuthula kwakho okwelanga lonke, ngasengikholwa-ke konke okwakwenzakele. Kwakungaqakathekanga ukuthi kasizange sikhulume. Kwakungasiso sikhathi esihle sokuthi sihlangane.

Ngananzelela ukuthi kwakumele ngimelele, mhlawumbe okwenyanga ezithize. UThenjiwe lami...ya, sasike sazwanana kakhulu. Sasimunye okwesikhathi esifitshane. Kunzima ukukuchasisa, kwakuyisikhathi esitshiyeneyo. Sekunjalo ngasengisenza isinqumo sokuya edolobheni. Alubana impilo yayikhanya kuhle...akusaphathisi uku-banga ngalokho khathesi, kodwa ingqondo iyazula ilahleke, njalo ica-bange ngalokho okwakungenzeka okwakhuthekayo. Kwathi sengibale ngalokho okwenzakala kuye ngehluleka ukuhlalela khatshana...sengilapha khathesi. Ngifuna ukukuphathisa, uma ngingenelisa.’

‘Udadewethu kazange ake akuthinte kimi. Wayengitshela nsukuzonke yonke into esempilweni yakhe. Kungani wayethule ngawe?’

‘Mhlawumbe wayefuna ukukugcina kuyimfihlo yakhe, singatshonjalo, kumbe wayengakazimiseli ukukutshela. Angenelisi ukukuchasisa....kulezinye izindaba omunye angathanda ukuzithulela ngazo, ngitsho lakulabo aseduze labo kakhulu. Wangitshela ngawe, kodwa.’

‘Hatshi. Ngikholwa ukuthi wayezangitshela konke. Sasingafihlelani imfihlo yethu. Sasizwanana kakhulu. Wayengenzanjalo, mhlawumbe, ngesikhathi esizayo, uma ngabe waphila. Uma kuliqiniso, lokho phela, wayezangitshela ekucineni.’ Uyaqinisa uNonceba.

‘Ukumthanda kwakufana lokuhlala ezinkanyezini. Ngangifuna ukutshada laye. Sobabili sasisesaba. Silamadlabuzane, kodwa sisesaba kakhulu. Sasingazani kuhle okwaneleyo. Kwakumele ukuthi ngabe ngaphangisa ukuphenduka kulalokho engakwenzayo. Ubelami sonke isikhathi. Sonke siphila impilo zethu lengqondo zobuthutha, singakholwa ukuthi kukhona okubi kakhulu okungenzakala kithi. Singacabanga ngokufa, kodwa inkolo ngenye into epheleleyo yona ngokwayo.’

UNonceba uyakholwa kodwa kayethembi. Ilendlela ethambileyo emhugayo. Kayikachasisi ukuthi isebenza ewofisini enjani. Kayitsho ukuthi kungani iqoqa imibiko ekumaphephandaba mayelana labantu abanjengaye. Iyiqoqela bani? Imibiko le izasetshenziswa njani, okwakhathesi, kumbe ngesikhathi esizayo? Kungani, ngaleyo kuseni, wayekade eqoqa imibiko mayelana lalokho okwakwenziwe kuye, lakuThenjiwe? Kalalwazi lokuthi ibizo lakhe lalokade likuphephandaba. Kambe uSihle uyazi mayelana lalokho njalo engazange amtshele? Uyayicaphukela indoda le ngokumtshela mayelana lokuvezwa kuzulu wonke yena engazi lutho ngakho, ngesikhathi sayo loThenjiwe, laso futhi angazi lutho ngaso. Uyamangala nje ukuthi kungabe kuyini okunye okufihliweyo. Isifake ibizo lakhe efayilini. Yamgcina. Yamnamathisela phansi. Khathesi isilapha ukuzamdinga. Izimisele ukumbona uThenjiwe engekho. Uzwa ukuzonda okumsindayo njalo okuza ngokuphangisa okufuna ukuthi isuke masinya nje. Mhlawumbe uThenjiwe wayeyithanda njalo lokhu kutsho ukuthi yayilungile kuye, kodwa isikhathi sesedlula njalo wonke umuntu sewaguquka. UNonceba angeke asebenzisa leso sibopho esiqinisayo ukwahlulela ukuthembeka kwayo. Ngemva kwakho konke lokho osekwenzakele kunzima ukuthemba yiloba ngubani, abantu bayaguquka njenongonwabu. Kungenzeka njani ukuthi ize lapha kungaselalutho oluphathelelayo, engasekho loThenjiwe esimthumbile eqiniseni layo.

‘Awesabi ukuhlala lapha uwedwa?’ Iyabuza. Yazini ngokwesaba, mayelana lalokho asamelana lakho? Yazini ngaphandle kokuzingenisa

kwayo nje?

‘Hatshi. Kangesabi. Ngakhulela lapha. Abomndeni wami bonke bahlala kulowaya umuzi oseduze. Uma ngingaphakamisa ilizwi lami, bonke obaba abancane bangangizwa.’

Uzwakala angathi uyahlanya, uyakwazi, kodwa uyadonda ukuvuma kuyo ukuthi kasahlali lapha, ngempela, ukuvuma ukuthi ukwesaba kwakhe yikho okwamenza wasuka. Kalasifiso sokuwuma yiloba yini phakathi kwabo. Iqondile, kodwa kalasifiso sokuqinisa imicabango yayo ukwenzela ukuthi ikholeke, lokho ngumlandu wayo hatshi owakhe. Uyenqaba isenzo sayo: sokuza eKezi: imbuza imibuzo engathi ilipholisa: ukuthatha umkhumbulo kaThenjiwe iwenza owayo ngendlela angeke ayicabanga.

‘Ngemva kwalokho osekwenzakele lapha. Kumele wesabe. Kungaba yikuhlakanipha ukwesaba,’ iyaqinisa. Lapha. Itshonjalo. Lapha. Kambe iyakwazi sibili ukuthi kukusiphi isiqephu somhlabathi lapha yena, uNonceba, akuzwa khona ukulahlekelwa kwakhe? Iyakwazi lapha uThenjiwe afela khona? Kuyiphi indawo yomhlabathi lapha abulawelwa khona? Lapha, itshonjalo, engathi iyakwazi sibili okwenzakala lapha? Kayazi lutho mayelana lokwalapha. Lemizwa ngalelo lapha. Lokukhangeleka kwakho. Isikhatshana esigcwele kangaka lowo lapha. Kayilamkhumbulo ngaye lapha, lapha okufele khona udadewabo, hatshi njengento ephilayo, kodwa evalelwe phakathi kwengalo zomuntu ongaziwayo. Ufuna ukuhleka, ngendlela engaqedakaliyo njalo okohlanyayo, ehleka ukuza kwayo lapha, njalo ikhuluma ngoThenjiwe isitsho konke okumele ikutsho mayelana lokubona kwayo izehlakalo, ezalapha. UNonceba uzizwa esesusiwe kuyo, ephelele emikhumbulweni yakhe. Ubuhlungu bakhe ngobakhe, abuthinteki, abusilutho olungavezwa emuntwini ongaziwayo okusuke nje kwenzakala ukuthi alandele impilo yakhe eyedlulayo lapha. Lapha, itshonjalo, ingazi lutho ngitsho mayelana lakho. Kayazi na ukuthi kungenzeka nje ukuthi umhlabathi ongaphansi kwezinyawo zakho uhidlike nje uye khatshana ungaphindi ubuye futhi? Ukuthi ilapha liyanyamalala kungela sizatho njalo kukutshiye ungekho lapha, kodwa

ungekho ndawo ngitsho, njalo impilo yakho yonke yilesi sizungu esiphikelelayo sikudla uphela, njalo ingqondo yakho iyakhumuzeka njengomduli, njengalokho nje, ngasikhathi sinye uhamba njalo ugiqika phakathi kwesibhakabhaka lomhlabathi ungela omunye umcabango kodwa lesi sizungu?

‘Ngihlala lapha. Ngilezilonda zami. Kangesabi.’ Uyasukuma esihlalweni njalo ahambe engena kwelinye ikamelo, efuna kakhulu ukuba yedwa, ekhatshana kwayo, kodwa uyaphenduka masinya, efuna ukugijimisa isikhathi phakathi kwabo. Usevule iwindi ekamelweni.

Uphinda njalo ahlale phansi, ekhangelane layo engakwelinye icele. Usephelelwe yisineke sokufuna ukuthi isuke. Ukuthi iyekele ukhulululuza ingqondo yakhe njengalokho. Uhlala phansi emangala ukuthi kuzakuba nini ingakasukumi, idobhe ingowane yayo etafuleni, iphindele emuva emgwaqweni omkhulu imtshiya ezihlalele kuhle yedwa, ukwenzela ukuthi acabange ngommango ongabalekiyo ophakathi kwalapha lakhathesi.

‘Ngicabanga ukuthi kumele usuke eKezi,’ iyatsho. Ilizwi layo seliguqukile. Uyakuzwa. Ikhuluma laye engathi ungumntwana. Umntanayo.

‘Angilasifiso sokusuka eKezi. Akukho okubi okwedlula lokhu okungenzakala kimi khathesi. Kungani kumele ngibaleke? Impi ikhona yonke indawo. Kayikho na edolobheni?’

‘Izinto ezimbi okwedlula lokhu zingenzakala uma uqhubeka ulapha eKezi, ungavikelwanga. Ngifuna uhambe lami, koBulawayo. Kakukubi le. Impi isemakhaya kakhulu. Ngifuna ukukuphathisa, ngikwenzela uThenjiwe, ngivumele ngikuphe usizo lwami. Ngifuna ukukuphathisa. Mhlawumbe ngikwenzela mina ngokwami. Yekela ngiphathise. Sengikwenzile lokho ngizakutshiya wedwa. Ngiyazi ngingakuphathisa. Ngiyacela ukuthi ungiyekele ngenze engingakwenelisa.’

Amaginqo engakomi lokoma ebunzini layo isimcela ukuthi atshiye ikhaya lakhe ahambe layo koBulawayo. Lokhu yikho okwenze yabuya. Iyakutsho ekucineni, amazwi esiwa, elamandla. Ifuna

ukumthatha ihambe laye. Iyaphikelela. Uzizwa esedidekile ngalokhu kuthemba kwayo okusakuhlanya okweyanyiswe kuphela emikhumbulweni yothando lwayo lodadewabo. Kuyini lokho abakwabelanayo, uyamangala, yizithembiso bani abazenzayo omunye ethembisa omunye? Okungaphezulu kwalokhu, kungani yena ebe engongaphandle, engazi lutho ngakho konke kuze kuthi yona ivuke njengomsindisi imthathele udadewabo njalo lobuhlungu bakhe bonke ikwenze okwayo? Uqedwa amathe njalo abe lokudideka ngalokhu kuzithemba kwayo, uyaphelelwa, azonde, efuna ukuthi isuke ihambe khatshana loba kungaba ngokwesikhathi esifitshane, ukwenzela ukuthi amise kuhle imicabango yakhe imelane lemisindo yamazwi ayo, lokuthi vumbu kwayo isibakhona, imelana njalo lothando lukaThenjiwe olwemfihlo, lenhliziyo yakhe egigayo. Angenza kanjani ukuthi acabange ngakho konke lokhu okumele anakane ngakho yona ihlezi imbukele njalo imlindele ukuthi akhulume. Iyancenga ukuthi avume ingamvumeli ukuthi ake abe lesikhatshana yena ngokwakhe.

Yonke imicabango yakhe iyabuthana njengothuli njalo phakathi kwalokho ukhangela ingalo zayo ezibekwe phezu kwetafula ngasikhathi sinye yona ikhangele ngqo kuye engathi kayilalutho elufihlayo, njalo uyakwazi ukuthi ukhululekile ukubuza yiloba yiphi imibuzo, njalo izamphendula, ngokuzithoba langesineke. Kakwazi ukuthi angabuzani ukwenzela ukuthi avule indlela phakathi kwabo, hatshi, indlela engqondweni yakhe yena ngokwakhe. Endaweni yalokho uzithulele, esazi kakuhle ukuthi lokhu akulani lemibuzo okumele iphendulwe, kodwa kumayelana lokuzizwela kwakhe, ukuba kwakhe ngumnikazi wempilo. Isicelo sayo siyalenga phezu kwabo, silengisiwe ekamelweni. Yisisa. Yisicelo. Yikwethusela? Ilindele ukuphendulwa. Kambe ingamlimaza na? Kungabe kwakuyinjongo yayo lokho na?

Wayeyibone esibhedlela. Umkhumbulo lo usengqondweni yakhe. Kambe izizatho zayo zokumethekelela khonale zazisegcekeni njen-goba izitsho khathesi ukuthi zazinjalo, zingezomusa? Uyazi mayelana lokulimaza. Uyakwazi ngobukhona bomuntu ozamlimaza: kuseduze

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ngokulinganayo. Uyazwisisa ukuthi ubukhona lobo bungenelisa njani ukufika ngemuva kwengqondo njalo bubone busiyafika phansi esizibeni sokwesaba esingaphansi. Angenelisa njani ukulalela isicelo esesabekayo esomuntu ongaziwayo ohambe indledlana elotshani njalo wathola inhliziyi engelamngane imlindele, igcwele lemikhumbulo yayo ilindele umuntu ongaziwayo ukuthi aphenidule amehlo lelizwi lakhe kuqonde kuye njalo athi umupha impilo, hatshi ukufa? Yenalo umuntu ongaziwayo khathesi uselwisa ubukhona bakhe njalo emazisa ukuthi konke alakho phambi kwakhe yikufa, hatshi impilo, imtshela lokhu yena evele esekwazi njalo ethwele ulwazi lolu luthe mbe emehlweni akhe. Kakusikho na lokhu akuphayo, omunye umhlobo wempilo ngemva kokuba konke sekugqitshelwe? Ukuphunyuca?

'IKEzi ngamangcwaba anqunu', itshonjalo. 'Akusiyo yini indlela umuntu wonke abiza ngayo iKEzi, amangcwaba anqunu lapha okungangcwatshwa muntu khona njalo wonke umuntu uhlanyukelwe? Akulathemba lokuphila, yikufa kuphela. Ukufela lapha yikulahlelwa amanqe lamangcwaba angaziwayo. Kakho okwaziyo ukuthi sekufe abantu abangaki. Kakho okwaziyo ukuthi kuzaphela nini, njalo uma kuzaphela. Ungeke ube usaqhubeka uhlala lapha. Yekela ngikuncede. Ungaphenduka njalo uma yonke into isiguqukile.' Iyancenga engathi ukwemukela isicelo sayo kungaba yikuyipha impilo.

Ucabanga ngoThenjiwe njalo uzama ukumhlenganisa lendoda le, umuntu lo ongaziwayo oncengayo ephambi kwakhe, omupha ulutho olufana lokubakhona, lempilo. Kambe uThenjiwe sibili wake waba lale indoda? Uyahlolisisa ubuso bayo esazi ukuthi akwenzayo akulamsebenzi kodwa efuna ukuzwisisa ngenye nje indlela uma uThenjiwe wayeke waba layo, ukuthi yayingaba yindoda yokuthi uThenjiwe ayithande, ahlale layo loba kungaba ngokwesikhatshana nje. Ukhangela ingalo zayo ezilokhu zibekwe phezu kwetafula, izihlakala zayo ezigotshisiweyo. Kayizange ike inyakaze selokhu ihlale esihlaleneni lesiyana. Igqoke kuhle, ithobekile. UThenjiwe ube elale indoda, wayithinta. Kuyini uThenjiwe akuthandayo mayelana layo? Kungabe zintshiya zayo, zimnyama okwe-inki? Yilizwi layo, libuthakathaka,

lilamandla, lilokuzithemba? Ngumusa wayo? Ukuzinikela kwayo mhlawumbe sonke isikhathi ukuthi iphathise, ukwenelisa kwayo ukunikela impilo yayo kwabanye, kuye, kudadewabo? Ukuthanda kwayo okokuzinikela? Ukwenelisa kwayo ukuzwisisa ubuhlungu bomunye? Kungabe kwakuyilokho? UNonceba ukhangela emehlweni alo umuntu ongaziwayo edinga kuwo indawo ekhatshana lapho uthando, hatshi ukulimaza, oluqala khona.

UNonceba kamangali sibisibili ukuthi uThenjiwe wayengamtshe-
langa mayelana lothando lolu njalo ngale indoda. Okummangalisayo yikuthi yena, uNonceba, kazange azi ngalo kungakabi khathesi. Ngoba uma uThenjiwe wayithanda indoda le, loba okwesikhatshana nje, kwakumele azi ngakho ngenye nje indlela ngoba wayesazi uThenjiwe ngendlela eligugu, elibalulekileyo. Wayengazi ngakho, kodwa uqhubeka engazi, ngitsho loba indoda ezibiza ngoCephas Dube ihlezi ikhangelane laye ilalo lonke uthando lolo emehlweni ayo njalo lokulandisa kwayo ngobunono kusemlonyeni wayo kungela lokuthandabuza okukodwa ebunzini layo, uzizwa elokhu engazi lutho ngitsho ngalo engazi ngitsho lengxenywe yakuqala eyendatshana le. Kunini lapho imizwa etshisayo eyavuleka yodwa khona? Kungasiphi isikhathi somnyaka lapha abathandana khona becatshe kangaka kuye owayesazi konke okwakukhona ukuthi kwaziwe mayelana loThenjiwe okugogela lezinto uThenjiwe owayengazazi ngaye yena ngokwakhe, ayengeke azitsho kodwa kunguNonceba kuphela owayengenelisa, njalo wakwenza, njalo bobabili bakwemukela ukuthi bubili babo babedingana empilweni?

UNonceba, owayesebenzisa kamelo linye lodadewabo kusukela betshiywa ngunina njalo ebalaya ukuthi bagcinane, njalo bobabili babesindile kulokho kutshiywa ngoba babendawonye sonke isikhathi uyise waze wafa njalo basinda lakulokho ngoba basebebadala njalo babengasinda esikhathini salamuhla ngitsho okwesikhathi eside okwedlula isikhathi esadlulayo, kodwa khathesi uThenjiwe usefile pho yena, uNonceba, kwakumele enzenjani ukuze asinde kukho konke lokho engelaThenjiwe ukuthi akhulume laye mayelana lakho? UNon-

ceba wayeseduze kakhulu kuThenjiwe okokuthi wayesenelisa ukuzwa linye ngalinye lamaphupho akhe njalo amtshele ngawo, ngoba yebo, babephupha amaphupho manye njalo bathola kuphela amazwi ehlukeneyo awalawo maphupho. Wayengazi lutho ngoCephas, engazi lutho ngalo umuntu ongaziwayo ololimi olunambithekayo njengenyosi otsho konke okwakungatshiwo mayelana loThenjiwe ngaphandle kwamazwi ayengambuyisa, amenze ahambe ekamelweni njalo abafice bobabili izandla zabo ziphezu kwetafula njalo amehlo abo ejolozele izolo elingekho. Akukho lokukodwa kwalokho. Endaweni yalokho, umuntu ongaziwayo uhlezi phambi kwakhe njalo esenza angathi wazi konke lokho okuqondileyo lokubi ekwazela yena, emtshela mayelana labo bonke ubuhlungu bakhe yena Nonceba lobuhlungu bakhe lowo muntu, njalo esitsho ibizo likaThenjiwe kalula njalo engathikazi ingathi ulesimo lohleko njalo lobuntu abubambanisa lalelo bizo okufana lalokho akwenzayo yena Nonceba. Lamuhla, kule imini egcwele umoya wamaganu, umuntu lo ongaziwayo, usephongungena nje njalo wazenza waba sekhaya. Ekhaya. Emcela ukuthi adinge isikhwama aqoqele kuso izigqoko zakhe, azigoqe, sinye ngasinye, njalo amlandele edolobheni, ezifaka engozini yomhlambi wamasotsha avuka njengentethe ezixukwini, ehamba engumhlambi evala umgwaqo, imibhobho ixega njalo ilula ngaphansi kwezihlakala zawo. Ufuna ukuthi atshiye konke engathi kasuwalapha njalo angenelisa ukusuka nje ngoba kulengqondo ukwenzanjalo, kulengqondo kuye lowo muntu ongaziwayo, lokhu kungumbono wakhe lowo muntu, ngekusasa kanye lezolo yakhe. Efuna ukusiza, utshonjalo. Njani? Ukumthatha asuke laye lapha. Ukumsusa ezintweni azaziyo, engathi lokho ngempela kungenziwa kalula nje njengokuphosa imali yelitshe phezulu ukuze ubone okumele kwenziwe. Indlela yalo muntu abona ngayo ukuphunyuka; indlela yakhe, yena Nonceba, abona ngayo ukubeka phansi izikhali.

Akusimusa, mhlawumbe. Ngolunye ulutho. Sekunjalo umcabango omubi kakhulu ungena engqondweni yakhe njalo uyaphenduka akhangele le eselenhloni ngokuwucabanga kodwa wayevele esewu-vumele ukungena engqondweni yakhe njalo sekumele alandele um-

cabango lowo uze ufike ekucineni. Kumele acabange kuhle phakathi kwalowo mcabango, sekunjalo abe esewuphosela eceleni, awugcine uma kudingeka, kodwa kumele awucabange ngoba lokho yikho okumele akwenze. Kumele acabange ngokubi kakhulu okwedlulisi-leyo kuqala. Kambe kungabe mhlawumbe indoda le iyazi owayengafuna ukubulala uThenjiwe njalo ekwenzelani? Khona nje, isehlakalo ongeke wasicabangela kakusikuthi siyacatshangelwa kuphela ukuthi singenzakala, kodwa siyenzeka, eKezi. Njengoba isitsho, ngamangcwaba anqunu. Lokhu yikho ekutshoyo, ngempela, ukuthi akula ngitsho lomzidlana owehlukanisa ukuphila lokufa, eKezi. Kambe imi phezu kwalowo mzidlana na? Kambe kungabe lo ngumsebenzi wayo omqoka, owokuba leqiniso lokuthi abafuleyo bangeke benelise ukukhetha amaphupho abo, labaphilayo labo bangeke? Lokhu yikho amadoda azihambela wodwa eguswini akwenzayo kanye lamasotsha - bubili babo bazimisele ngokulinganayo ukutshabalalisa izimpilo. Njengoba iyindoda eyenelisa ukuzingenisa engozini, ikwenza ngobuthakathaka, mhlawumbe ingamtshela ukuthi kuyini sibili okwenza ukuthi indoda ikhangele owesifazana njalo imqumaqume njengesiqephu sesikhumba esomileyo ingazibuzanga ngitsho lambuzo owodwa mayelana lezenzo zayo ngokwayo, ngitsho lokuzibuza ngesikhathi so-suku? Kwakudinga ukuthi indoda ibe lani ukuze ibe lokulalela okunjalo? Kusengqondweni yakhe yena uNonceba ngakho ukutsho kuye yena ngokwakhe, uyangunguna aze asuthiseke, ethule, esethesa icala umuntu ongaziwayo othi kathathe uhambo lokusuka eKezi.

Bayathula okwesikhathi eside baze bazizwe sebehlalisekile bubili babo ngokuthula njalo lokungatsho lutho ngitsho kodwa bayekele isikhathi sedlule. Kabakhulumi. Kabatsho lutho kodwa baqoqa imicabango yabo. Ekucineni, ithatha isandla sikaNonceba esokudla isibambabambe phakathi kwesayo, engathi ibala amathambo kaNonceba anciphileyo linye ngalinye. Uyayiyekela ithathe isandla sakhe isibambe, ingafuni ukutsho yiloba yini, ikhetha lolu ulimi lokuthula asebelutholile. Iphendula isandla sikaNonceba ngapha langapha, imbambe engathi ungumcabango oligugu osengqondweni yayo, inga-

funi ukuthi uNonceba asuke engqondweni yayo ngitsho. Iyamkhangela njalo yehle ikhangele izandla zakhe uNonceba aze agobise iminwe yakhe, ayigoqele kweyayo. Uyiyekele imbambe engathi kasalawuli izifiso zakhe, njalo ngempela kasazilawuli. Ikhangela phezulu komunye njalo osekamelweni, hatshi uNonceba, engathi omunye lowo usetsho olunye ulutho njalo ilalela lelo elinye ilizwi elikhuluma labo bobabili lisenza kungadingeki kubo ukuthi batsho yiloba yini. Kulokhu kuthula okude njalo okumangalisayo uNonceba ubona ukukhanuka emehlweni ayo, ukuphelelwa lithemba, okudala njalo okugcinwe kuhle. Ibamba izandla zikaNonceba zombili ndawonye, phakathi kwezayo, ingaphakathi lengaphakathi yezandla indawonye.

ISAPHLUKO SETSHUMI LESIKHOMBISA

UMBHALO ONGAPHANDLE KWESHOPU yamaluba uthi Joan the Florist, ubhalwe ngamabala amakhulu awesiliva. Ingxenywe yakuqala, Joan, ibhalwe ngekhesivi. Umi esitubhini, ungakhangelala ubone phakathi kweshopu ukhangele emangilazini ehlukanisayo. Kulomunye umbhalo, ophezu kwezivalo zengilazi njalo uphezulu ufika ekhalweni, uthi KUVALIWE NGENXA YESIMO SOMKHATHI. Kodwa-ke, phandle ilanga liyahlaba, lusuku olukhazimulayo enyangeni kaLwezi. Iphansi elilungiswe ngamathayili evinili lilamaluba amanengi awemihlobohlobo asemabhasikitini amakhulu okutshiyeneyo, aselungele ukuhanjiswa ezindaweni, ilixha elikhulu lamaluba, ilixha lamaluba elincane, ilixha lamaluba agoqelwe ngephepha elikhazimulayo.

Kulesivalo esingemuva kwekhawunta engaphansi esilungiswe ngobuce obulithanga; ukubalazwa okwenziwe kuso kufana lelitshe, kulemikenke ebomvana eselitsheni elilesendlalelo esilithanga okumhlotshana. Kokuphela kokuphela inina lifuqa lingene lisuka ekamelweni elingemuva lithwele ilixha lamaluba aselungisiwe eliwabeka phansi kuhle. Ligqoke ijazi elimhlophe lefasikoti emhlophe phezu kwejazi, lezicathulo ezimhlophe eziyisicaba. Kalimayimi. Lilokuziphatha okutshengisa ukuzinikela lokuphatheka kakhulu, lilenjongo, likhuthela, lisenza khonokho sibili. Liyaphenduka libuyele

emuva masinya, ekamelweni elikhamisileyo lapha amaluba athelezelwa khona, alungiswe, asikwe, aqunyelelwe, ahlonywe endiweni ezivalwe ngcingo ezelukiweyo, phezu kwamathala, ezimpontshini, ehlonywa engilazini zokunathela iwayini, amanye efakwe ezithelweni ezilungiswe kuhle.

Phambi kweshopu kulamanye amaluba amanengi, amaluba omileyo, lamaluba esiliki, abekwe phezu kwamangilazi okubukisa, afakwe embizeni zamaluba, lafakwe amakha esepa abotshelwa iribhoni, amakhandlela alengayo amibalabala, njalo kwelinye ithala lensimbi, kulamakhadi okuthakazelela izehlakalo ezitshiyeneyo. Kodwa, inengi lawo ngamaluba amatsha asanda kusikwa. Lapha isivalo sivuleka, amakha asuka kule inhlanganisela yamaluba aqhakazileyo avusa amadlabuzane: amaluba emihlobohlobo. Kulamaluba amalutshwane akhula esembizeni, athwalekayo, kufakwe izigojwana ngobunono obukhulu zokuwasekela. Isivalo sengilazi siyavuleka, njalo ibhera iyakhala phakathi kweshopu, inina elisekhawunteni liyakhangelana. Isivalo siyazunguzeka sibuyele emuva, sivaleke. Indoda isuka eshopu ingalo zigodle amaluba amarozi alungiswe abangumcijo ngaphezulu othinta amakhala ayo. Igobele emuva ukwenzela ukuthi ibone ngale kwamaluba, ibe isivula isivalo. Iyatshibilika, ilandela ukuhamba kwe-watshi. Ifulathela isivalo ukwenzela ukuthi amaluba avikeleke njalo angaphazanyiswa kwelinye icele. Iyahamba ibhoda lesivalo ibe isisehlela esitubhini. Iyahamba isehla ngesitalada amaluba iwaphakamisele phezulu, engaphezulu komhlambi wabantu ehlangana labo. Ibhera phakathi kweshopu iyakhala lapho isithunzi sayo sisithela ngale. Owesifazana osekhawunteni uyakhangelana. Inwele zakhe zinhle zinkulu njalo ziphothene. Ufake isikhava esinciphileyo esiyiphinki asibophele entanyeni, sibandezelwe phansi lisongo lensimbi phezu kwamabheqe ebhulawuzi yakhe. Isiketi esinciphileyo esimnyama esidanyazana sicina ngaphansanyana kwamadolo akhe, isiketi sihambelana lamasandali alezithende ezinde. Ibhulawuzi yakhe eyenziwe ngelembu lotshinda ibuthakathaka, iyabukeka. Mude njalo ufaka amangilazi emehlweni ahlala etshelela efika emakhaleni. Ngesandleni

sokudla, ulendandatho yama-emeradi lerubhi, ibholuphoyinti ihlonywe phakathi kweminwe, ukhweza amangilazi, ukwenza engananzelele akwenzayo, abe esekhangela phezulu. Umzidlana omn-cane obomvu ucombe izindebe, ubuso bufakwe iphawuda ngobunono. Iphawuda yokucomba inkophe. Iphawuda yokucomba amehlo. Uvula ibhuku lamarisithi njalo aqalise ukubhala ngokuphangisa. Uyema njalo afake ngonanzelelo iphepha eliluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka elekhabhoni phakathi kwamakhasi, abe eseqhubeka ngokubhala. Kukhala ifoni. Uyayidobha ayibambe eyihlome ngaphansi kwenwele zakhe ezigoqeneyo. Uyibamba ngobuciko ngehlombe lesandla sokudla, njalo akhulule isandla sakhe. Uyakhuluma njalo uvuma ngekhandla. Ubuyisela ifoni endaweni yayo. Uyavula amakhasi njalo afake iphepha lekhabhoni. Uyabhala. Iveni ethwala impahla ima phambi kweshopu. Ngemuva kwayo kubhalwe ukuthi Joan the Florist. Indoda iphuma evenini iphethe ibhasikiti engelalutho njalo ibe isin-gena eshopu. Iyaqhula lapha ihamba. Umzimba wayo utshekele kwe-sokudla kancane. Igqoke ijazi elimhlophe. Isivalo siyazunguzeka sivuleka. Ibhera iyakhala. Owesifazana ulungisa amangilazi akhe ekhangela.

UNonceba uhamba esedlula umduli wengilazi koJoan the Florist, uyahamba edlule umnyango weshopu ovulekela esitaladini uFife. Weqa u-9 Avenyu njalo ahambe eqonde ebhanga lakoStandard Char-tered lapha okulodwendwe lwabantu abame bebhoda baze balingana lobude besakhiwo. Phakathi ebhanga kulezisebenzi ezinsundu ezisanda kuqhatshwa ezipha abantu imali zabo lamamaneja asafun-dela umsebenzi, asanda kuqeda izifundo zeziq zezenotho kumnyango wezenotho eNyunivesithi yeZimbabwe. Udwendwe lwabantu olusuka ebhanga luqhubeka lusiyafika esitolo sako-Edgars esezigqoko. Isakhiwo saso kasifani lesebhanga leStandard Chartered yona ez-iqhenya ngesakhiwo esenziwa yonke imicimbi yokwakha kugats-hazwa entubeni zaso zonke njalo lesakhiwo sonke jikelele, isakhiwo sako-Edgars ngesakulezi insuku, silamangilazi aconjiweyo akhwela esiyaphezulu lensika zekonkiri ezimi zinkulu zingakaya, izithombe

ezibunjwe sabantu ezokubukisa izigqoko zithe tshingilili emaceleni womabili. Isitolo sako-Edgars yishopu yakuqala enkulu koBulawayo ukusebenzisa izithombe ezimnyama ezibunjiweyo ezokubukisa izigqoko emawindini aso khonokho nje ngemva kokutholakala kukazibuse. Ngemva kweminyaka emithathu, wonke odlulayo lapha ulokhu ekhangela emawindini ebuka ubuso obumnyama obulengalo ezelulwe zachaywa engathi zisekela inqwaba lenqwaba yobulembu. Abathengi abansundu bangena ngomnyango wangaphambili bahambe baqonde lapha okulomoya olawulwayo khona belokukhangela kwenjabulo lokumangala.

Khonokho nje, umsindo webhera ugcwala yonke imigwaqo yedolobho. Umsindo usuka khonaphana kanye ngaphansi kwewatshi esewolu yedolobho, enzikini yedolobho. UNonceba uyayizwa kokuphela kokuphela lapha iginya umsindo wezimota labantu bezinyawo lamawuta kanye lowamabhera amabhayisikili. Ngemva kwayo yonke imizuzu elitshumi lanhlanu umoya uyanyikinyeka ngomsindo webhera esesitaladini uFife. Uyawukholisa umsindo lo odumayo, umsindo ogcwala idolobho, njalo ulilimukise, libe lemizwa yokulindela okuzayo. UNonceba ukhangela eceleni elisesandleni senxele ewolu yedolobho. Phezulu kwephila ebusweni bayo kulewatshi enkulu ephanyekwa emdulini, ithi isikhathi yimizuzu elitshumi lanhlanu ngemva kwehora lesibili emini. Usehamba ephangisa, wedlula indoda ethengisa amawatshi lamabhanti ephakamisa ingalo zayo kuye wonke odlula lapha ibukisa amawatshi ayo. Uyedlula lokho. Uyedlula iKhona lamaTshiphisi elikhupha umoya onuka kubi owa-mafutha okuphekisa, owamagwili loweviniga. Phambi kwewolu yedolobho okulengadi yamaluba amarozi ahlanyelwe emanengi, kulomthombo ongasasetshenziswayo, okuyiwo umthombo wakuqala okwakutholwa khona amanzi ekufikeni kwamapayinela ezehlala edolobheni leli. Lamuhla kulebhentshi kuphela elisele ligxunyekwe khonaphaya, lomduli ogombolozeleyo owokuwuvikela olombhalo emaphethelweni awo. Phambi komthombo omdala kulemihlambi lemihlambi yabathengisi bamaluba, abentanga zonke njalo begqoke

okwehlukeneyo, behlangana njalo bephikisana. Lapha, kuyaxokozela njalo kuyimibala enkanyazelayo.

Abathengisi bamaluba bagcwala esitaladini besuka ku-9 Avenyu behle bevale lonke icele lewolu yedolobho baze bayekuthi ngqe kwelinye icele, kuSolobhoni. Kuyankanyazela. Ngaphezulu kwamakhanda abathengisi bamaluba izihlahla ezilemibala enkanyazelayo ziqhakaze amaluba azo, ziphosa imithunzi yazo evikelayo phezulu kwamaluba, njalo laphezulu kwabathengisayo njalo ziphosa umbala obomvu ohahazayo; impoko zinde, zinciphile, zinengi. Yindawo ebonakalayo eguquka kokuphela. Amaluba abekwe phakathi kwamabhakede alamanzi ahlaliswe phansi emhlabathini, enyaweni zabathengisayo abalamazwi anjengamabhera amancane akhwela emoyeni ogcwele impoko ukuze ahlangebeze ngomusa abathengi njalo aqambe iluba linye ngalinye njalo atsho lobuhle balo. 'Amarozi amatsha... amafulemulili... Nkosikazi... amafulemulili ngamaluba angajwayelekanga... ngiyakupha imbasela... nkosikazi..' Amazwi abo ayabamba, ayahuga, alothando, akhuluma kamnandi njalo encenga. Bakhulumisana labathengi mayelana lentengo, baklabalale njalo bazidele. Inina libamba ukhalo lwalo liluthi mfi, liphikisa mayelana lentengo, lilamadlabuzane, liklabalala ngezwi elincane, lehlise ilizwi. Liyahleka, njalo liphendula ikhanda lalo likhangele le khatshana, liyasuka kumthengi kanye lemalubeni njalo lisebenzisa umganu wensimbi omncane, lifafaza impoko ngamanzi. Lapha sekulilungele lona likhangela phezulu, njalo likhethe ukuguqula ingqondo yalo, libophe ubuso, litshekele phambili beselisehlisa intengo. Ngemuva kwalo, esitaladini uFife, izimota ziduma zisedlula. Amawuta evala indlebe. Izimota ziyatshelela, zikhuthe, njalo ziqhubekele phambili. Abatshayeli bayathetha njalo batshelele lezimota; behlisa isiqubu emahlanganangwaqo njalo behlise amawindi abo, sebephelelwe yisineke. Abezinyawo bahaluzela beseqa isitalada njalo beceza phakathi kwezimota beqonde erenkini yamathekisi akoRixi ekhoneni lika-9 loFife. Inina licina liwisa iphika, lisemukela imali leyo njalo lidedele ilixha lamaluba. Abathengisayo behlisa intengo, njalo bayikhweze futhi kumthengi

olandelayo, baphinde bayehlise futhi iyephansi kakhulu kulakuqala, bahotshe uqhatshi lwamaluba, beqaphile. Impoko ezibomvu ziyawa zivale indlela engelalutho phezu kwezitubhu lapha okuzulazula khona abathengi; banyathela phezu kwamaluba ankanyazelayo asewele phansi. Kuyankanyazela, imizila lemizila yamaluba emibala yonke njalo ekhula, eqhakaza, esiwa, esevuleke athi nge; umule wamaluba ucomba iminwe ekucineni kwayo. Ilixha lamarozi linye ngalinye ligoqelwe ngekhadibhokisi elisikiweyo labotshwa laqina ngerekeni. Izigojwana zamaluba ziqunywa zicijele eceleni ukwenzela ukuthi izikhala eziphefumula ngazo zingonakali njalo amaluba enelise ukuphefumula. Umthengisi munye ngamunye ulegabha lensimbi eligcwele nswi izigojwana zamaluba lamaluba aseswabile lamahlamvu alahliweyo njalo lamakhadibhokisi avuthuzekileyo. Abathengisi bahlala phezulu kwamagabha bafithizele amaluba phansi, baphumule, baxoxisane. Sekunjalo bayasukuma phakathi kobunkanyankanya bamaluba abomvu, badumele amaluba. Ngakwelinye icele lewolu yedolobho, usehla ngo-9 Avenyu kulesilindo samabhasi aqonda ezabhabha ezingempumalanga: iFour Wings, iKumalo, iIloana, iMontrose, iSouthwold, iMatsheumhlophe leFamona. Amabhentshi kanye lemithunzi kugcwele, kuyaxokozela ngokhondakitha abasileyo abathengisa lokubhoboza amatikiti, abathengisa ama-orenji, lamabhasi atshaye udwendwe elandela isitubhu, injini ziholobela phansi, njalo labesifazana abadonsa abantwababo belandela; amantombazana ansundu asanda kuqalisa ezikolo ezazifunda abamhlophe bodwa, agqoke amayunifomu amahle aluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka awesikolo semfundo ephezulu eseMontrose lese-Eveline; abafana abasuka esikolo semfundo ephezulu eseGifford leseMilton; njalo labancinyane abavela ezikolo zemfundo ephansi eThomas Aquinas, eHenry Low leGreenfield. Ngale komgwaqo yisitolo sakoHaddon and Sly lapha ongathenga khona impahla yesiliva kanye lamangilazi adula okwamagama lezibane ezilungiswe ngobuciko baphezulu.

UNonceba uceza izixuku zabantu ezigombolozele iwolu yedolobho njalo uqhubeka engakwelinye icele lesitalada uFife, uthi lapha esed-

lule isakhiwo esilandelayo eqe aye kwelinye icele lomgwaqo, ephenduka esuka esitolo semithi esako Q.V. esikusakhiwo seKirrie, aqonde ko-O.K.Bazaars, adlule koWoolworths, nanguya esekoStella Nova Photo Studio, aqhubeke esiya ku-15 Avenyu lesitalada uWilson. Izimota zimiswe zikhangele isitubhu njalo indoda egqoke iyunifomu eluhlaza esijujukile ihlola amamitha lapha ezimiswe khona ukuthi isikhathi esivunyelweyo kasikapheli na njalo ibhale amatikiti iwahlome ngaphansi kwamawayipha ezimota, ikwenza emoteni yinye ngayinye. Ekhoneni lesitalada lesi kulenhlobonhlobo yamazini lamaphephandaba okwendlalwe phansi emhlabathini - uluhlu oludala lweDrum, olweMoto, lolweParade. Othengisayo ugcina intshintshi yakhe iphakathi kwengowane ayibeke yakhangela phezulu eceleni kwakhe. Ulenqumbi yemali yamatshe phakathi kwayo. UNonceba ubingelela othengisayo ngokuphakamisa kancane iminwe yakhe. Othengisa amazini ubamba iphephandaba le*Chronicle* emtshengisa. Unyikinyisa ikhanda lakhe njalo uvula umnyango ekhoneni lesitalada lesi. Uyangena, anyathele ngokuphangisa edlule. Isivalo silandela ngemva kwakhe, njalo sivaleke. Umsindo wedolobho usungemuva kwakhe. Phambi kwakhe, izitebhisi eziqansa phezulu, zipholishwe kuhle. Unyathela kancane ekhwela izitebhisi esiya kusitezi sesibili.

UNonceba uma phambi kwenombolo 341 kuKensington Flats. Uyakhiyina isivalo esipendwe saba luhlaza okwesibhakabhaka, njalo uyangena. Uqhaklaza isibane, njalo ehlise ukukhanya kwaso ukuze kungakhanyi kakhulu. Iphansi lesitezi lesi lilungiswe ngezigojwana ezimiswe kuhle kusuka emkhandlweni kuze kuyefika endlini yokuphumulela, besekusiba lamakamelo amabili okulala akhangeleneyo, ikamelo lokugezela, levurandi. Usuka emkhandlweni, kulentuba iyakhiwe yaba legobela ekhokhelela ekhitshini. Phakathi ekhitshini, kulefiriji encane, igedlela likagetsi, imbiza lamapani, lendawo yokugezisela izitsha elamasinki amabili. Kulesitofu. Kulamakhobothi akhelwe emdulini, phakathi kwawo kulemiganu, amapani, lenhlanganisela yezinto eziphekwayo. Ikamelo lokugcinela ukudla lempahla yokuphekisa lisekucineni kwesandla senxele, umduli walo ufika

ephahleni olulesilingi yamapulanka ephayini. UNonceba uphosela iphakethe lezithelo abeligodle ngengalo ebhasikitini eseduze lendawo yokugezisela izitsha, esandleni sakhe senxele kulengoxo encane okudlelwa khona ukudla kwekuseni eyehla ngakwelinye icele, kulebhentshi elixhunywe kuyo, izihlalo ezimbili zikhangele emdulini, zivalwe ngamalembu alombala obomvu lomhlophe. Kukhona lendawo yokugcinela imithanyelo. Uyakhothama evula isivalo sefiriji. Uthatha imbodlela elomhluzi wama-orenji, athathe ingilazi ekhabothini engaphezu kwakhe, akuthwale kokubili aphume lakho eqonde ekamelweni lokuphumulela. Uthi tshelele phezu kwesofa elihlala abantu abathathu njalo abeke okunathwayo phambi kwakhe phezu kwetafula elincane. Ubeka imethi ngaphansi kwengilazi. Kuletafula elincinyane eliseceleni khonapha ekamelweni okulefoni phezu kwalo. Kulamawindi amancinyane amabili akhangele phansi endaweni elamacele alinganayo lapha okulocingo lokuchayela impahla olubhodayo, ulakho ukukhangela emavulandini ezinye izitezi alezihlahlakazana ezikhula zisezimbizeni, lezihlalo zokuhlala phandle. Ngempelaviki, abantwana badlalela ngaphansi kwamashitibhethi abekwe lapho ukuze ome, amalembu abanjwe ngamaphegi elandela ucingo. Ngezikhathi ngezikhathi, omunye walabo abahlala kulezi zitezi eziphezulu uyamemeza ekhangele phansi etshela abantwana ukuthi bayekele ukuklabalala. Lokhu kubavusa usinga, njalo basuka baxotshane bephetshezela phakathi kwezigqoko, betshayelela ubuso babo emalenjini amhlophe asesoma; bayathula, sebeguquke baba yizithunzi. Amalembu ayaphephuka etshaya imizimba yabo, eyenza ibe ngamatsheshe abutshelazi amhlophe. Baphephezelisa ingalo zabo bengaphansi kwamalembu njalo baphenduke babe zinyoni ezinkulu, ezinkulu kakhulu okokuthi kazenelisi ukuphapha. Abadala babukela bese-mavurandini njalo bahoxise amazwi abo behleka ngokungelasineke.

Sekungumnyaka selokhu weza edolobheni njalo impilo isimhambela kuhle uNonceba. Ekufikeni kwakhe kwakuqala koBulawayo waya esibhedlela ukuyahlinzwa futhi, kanengi. Lapha efake iphawuda uphosa akhanye engathi kalimalanga. Uphosa. Empeleni, kakho om-

donsela amehlo. Kakho ophendukayo ukuze akhangele. Kakho obuza imibuzo.

UCephas senze khonokho kanye njengokutsho kwakhe ukuthi uza-kwenza aze abuye ukuzambona eKezi. Umbeka ekamelweni lokulala elibhekane lelakhe. Bahlala ndawonye. Ulungisa konke okwesibhedlela njalo aqoqe yonke into khonale elungisela yena; wenza umoya wakhe uhlaliseke. UNonceba uthola amandla kwelinye lelinye inyathelo elithathwa nguCephas yena Nonceba engalindele. Bahlala ndawonye, bahlala phakathi kokuba yedwa komunye lomunye wabo. Ngenye indlela, bahlala behlukene.

Ekamelweni lakhe kulombheda olala umuntu oyedwa, iwodirobhu, lerediyo, akulasibuko. UNonceba usengezelele okunye okwakhe, umfanekiso osemdulini, okunye abona esekudabule kumagazini, okutshengisa insimu yamaluba alithanga. UCephas sewamfakela umfanekiso lowo engilazini yokubukisa imifanekiso. Babethela isipikili emdulini. Uyambuza ukuthi ufuna ukuthi umfanekiso ube phezulu okungakanani. Uqamba indawo emdulini, ubeka umunwe wakhe khonapho uCephas aze afike ame eceleni kwakhe. Ucaba indawo leyo ngepeniseli. Ngemva kokuba umfanekiso usuphanyekiwe, bobabili bama batshedele emuva babuke. 'Kumncwa,' utshonjalo, njalo aqondise umfanekiso kancane. Khathesi ikamelo selingelakhe ngokupheleleyo. Kulo uletafula elincinyane eliyindingilinga lapha aphosela khona izintwana zakhe nxa efika ngekhaya, ubambazonke, okuphoselwa khona ugwalo, imagazini, ipheni. Kulelembu elendlalwa phezu kombheda elibuthakathaka elilithanga alithandayo, elilamavin-qovinqo emphethweni.

Iwindi likhangele phansi emgwaqweni ophatheke kakhulu. Inkwilimba zihlezi ephahleni lwesakhiwo esingakwelinye icele esiqondane lesabo. Uyenelisa ukubona phakathi kwamawofisi angale komgwaqo. Ifulegi iphephezela emoyeni, ekucineni kwesakhiwo. Seyaze yabamnyama ngentuthu yezimota; isidabukile, iphephezela emoyeni. Ifulegi yesizwe esitsha. UNonceba ubuka isitalada kumumo waso wonke oguqukayo. Kuleli ibanga, wazi ngokubona abantu

abasebenza kusakhiwo esingale komgwaqo ebabona ngewindi lakhe. Ubabona bengena, bephuma, bemi ezitebhisini. Inkwilimba zitshaya amaphiko ziphaphe zihambe. Ziyakhala. Zingcolise umduli. Zihwithe phakathi kwezakhiwo zitshone le zingasabonakali. Uyazizwa sezingale kwewindi. Zihlala kuyo yonke ingoxo, ngaphansi kwempahla, zicabuzela phezu kophahla lwezitezi zeKensington.

UCephas usemuphe ikhaya, njalo lempilo entsha. Kazisoli ngokuza edolobheni. Kusobala, ubudlelwano babo abubalulekanga. Buyajabulisa, besekelana. Bubili babo bayaxwaya ukuthi babuchasise, bephethwe yibumsulwa obazalwa yingozi eyadala ukuhlangana kwabo. Abakwenzi kuxubane ngemibuzo abangeke balinga ukuyiphendula. Lapha sekwedlule imizuzu engamatshumi amathathu ngemva kwehora lesihlanu ntambama nsukuzonke izimota edolobheni zizwakalela khatshana kuthi sekwedlule imizuzu engamatshumi amathathu kushaye ihora lesithupha sezizwakala kancane kakhulu. Izitalada kaziselalutho; kaziselalutho okokuthi usungezwa lomsindo wamavili ebhayisikili eledlulayo. Lapha uNonceba ekhangela njalo ngewindi, ukungabi khona komsindo kusobala. Umsindo wezinyawo ophansi. Izibane zesitaladini ezikhanya lufifi. Imota ephonguthutsha yodwa emelele ukuthi izibane ziguquke; okubomvu, okuluhlaza lokulithanga. UCephas uphenduka ngekhaya masinya. Kabaxoxi ngobudlelwano babo, lapha obuma khona. Bagxilisa ingqondo zabo kulokho okumele kwenziwe. Izinto abazi kuhle ngazo. Ukuncedisa, uhlobo lokuhlenga, ukukhululwa. Uyamncedisa. Baxwaya lokho okungacacanga, uthando, okuyikho sibili okungeke kwaziwa ukuthi kuzakubanjani, into yoluntu ekhona kokuphela, into ebucayi kakhulu, into enzima kakhulu ukuyilawula. Bayekela imizwa yabo ibekhona yehlukene emsebenzini munye ngamunye, ekwesabeni kwabo.

UNonceba uyambonga uCephas, ngobukhona balobu buthakathaka obuvumela ukuxekelana okungaqanjwanga. Kakwazi ukuthi angabe emphathisile yini. Ube engathanda ukuthi ngabe umphathisile, ngenye nje indlela. Kasenguye umuntu ongaziwayo, sekuyizinyanga ezilitshumi lambili, kodwa kulolu daba, kaziwa kuye. Ukuba lapha elaye

yikuba seduze asekwenzile, ukuba seduze laloba yiyiphi indoda: ukwazana okwezithandani. Uthwala amanxeba abonakalayo; uCephas uyamvikela kwangabonakaliyo. Kwesinye isikhathi lapha ekhangela uCephas, uyakubona ukuthikaza kwakhe, ukuzwa kwakhe ubuhlungu obupheleleyo. Ubuhlungu bunye ayebubone emehlweni akhe baze bahlangane. Bulokhu bukhona, njengelangabi elithuleyo, bungakhohlakalanga. Kakwazi ukuthi angathini kuye ukuze axotshe lobo buhlungu. UNonceba ulohambo lwakhe. Uhlobo lobungane babo lusekususweni kwezintwana ezinengi, ezimqoka, ukuze kumkhulule yena, uOnceba. Bangeke okwakhathesi baxoxe izindaba eziphathelele lembangela yokulahlekelwa kwabo lithemba. Kasikafiki isikhathi. Hatshi bendawonye. Behlukene, emakhoneni engqondo lapha besitsho ulutho komunye wabo, mayelana lokudla kwantambama kumbe ingilazi yamanzi, bebuzana ingabe isibane esikumkhandlo siyekelwe sikhanya kumbe hatshi, kumbe okuzathengwa mhlalokho. Imicabango yabo iphatheke kakhulu ngobunzima bezinto ezadlulayo. Ingqondo igqitshelwe ekulahleni kwayo ithemba, kodwa bayasinda, usuku ngosuku, ebunganeni babo. Isikhathi esadlulayo kubo sinzima kakhulu okwedlula esakhathesi; sikhona, silamandla amakhulu phezu kwabo. Ukuhabula itiyi, ukuqhubelana itshukela, iminwe yabo iyahlangana: imikhumbulo. Isenzo esingalula esokuxolelana; ukuphila nje khona kukhanya angathi yikuthengisa usenza abanye umnikelo. Kufanele ukuthi ngabe bamsindisa, loba ngezifiso zabo zodwa. Lokhu yikho abaphatheke ngakho, njalo bayakuvuma, njalo baphila lakho, ngenye nje indlela.

Ubuye lamaluba awathenge ewolu yedolobho, kwabathengisa amaluba. Amarozi amakhulu alithanga. Uwafaka engilazini yamaluba ayibeka etafuleni yefoni. Uthela itswayi emanzini abuthukuthuku. Sekuphele usuku azavuleka, njalo indlu izagcwala umoya omutsha oloqhatshi lwamarozi, amakha amnandi. Uthanda amarozi alithanga kakhulu, njalo kwesinye isikhathi uyawahlanganisa lamhlophe. Angahlala ekhupha amanzi efaka amatsha, amaluba angahlala adlule iviki. Uma okwesikhathi eside ekhangele amaluba. Umhlobo wa-

maluba onje wawungeke wakhula esihlabathini sikaKwakhe. Kuyamhlekisa. Into emqoka njengale itshengisa ukuthi ukhatshana kangakanani leKezi.

‘Sengithole umsebenzi,’ uNonceba utshonjalo.

‘Ukwaze njani lokho? Yebo, senganelise ukukutholela umsebenzi. Bengimelele ukukutshela, sesihlezi phansi. Bengifuna ukukujuma. Ukwaze njani?’

‘Lawe usungitholele okunye?’ uyabuza.

‘Yebo. Umsebenzi esipheleni sezingwalo. Ungawuthanda?’

‘Kuzamela ngike ngicabange ngakho. Akungitshele ngawo. Ngithanda umsebenzi engiwutholileyo, kodwa. Ngihlangane labantu bakhona khonale. Bakhanya belungile, besemukela ngomusa. Ngithanda lezikhathi zawo, futhi,’ utshonjalo.

‘Bengicabanga ukuthi ungathanda okuphathelene lezingwalo. Isiphala sezingwalo sikaHulumende sidinga umuntu. Kuzwakala kukholiseka.’

‘Hmm. Kumele ngicabange...’

‘Kuyamele wenze isinqumo, wena ngokwakho, mayelana lokuthatha umsebenzi kumbe hatshi. Kodwa bazathanda ukwazi kusasa. Ngithe kukhona engimaziyo. Bengikhonangale ikuseni yonke ngicwaninga. Ngazi uMphathi oMkhulu oweSiphala sezingwalo, umnuzana Drake, ngimazi kuhle sibili. Yindoda elomusa. Mhlawumbe ungakholisa ukusebenza laye. Uyanakekela kakhulu ngesiphala, konke okungaso. Udinga indlela zokusenza sibengcono. Inani labantu abasisebenzisayo seledlule okuphindwe kabili kusukela kwatholakala uzibuse. Udinga ukuphathiswa.’

‘Ngingathanda ukuhlangukanya laye. Imisebenzi emibili. Zindaba ezinhle zodwa, loba kunjalo.’

‘Uzacabanga ngakho?’

‘Ngizacabanga. Ngingakutshela isinqumo sami ekuseni? Ngithanda ukucabangisisa ngodaba lonke. Kusuke kwathi vumbu nje.’

‘Loba kunjalo kumele senze umkhosi wokuthakazelela lokhu. Akucabange ngokukutholela umsebenzi ngosuku lunye ozitholele um-

sebenzi ngalo wena ngokwakho. Kuyamangalisa,' utshonjalo.

UCephas uyaphenduka esesitofini lapha alungisa khona ukudla akhangele uNonceba. Kamdumeli. Uxwaya ukumthinta. Kuyethusa kakhulu. Ikakhulu kuNonceba. Kakakulungeli.

'Sengithole umsebenzi. Ngizitholela mina ngokwami. Esitaladini. Ngizitholele umsebenzi mina ngokwami. Ngizwa ngijabula ngakho!' Uyamtshela. Ngenjabulo. Ukunqoba kwakhe kwakuqala. Kuqakathekile. Loba ethe uzamtshela ekuseni, sekuphose kwenziwa isinqumo. Kusobala ukuthi uzathanda ukuya emsebenzini azitholele wona. Uyavumelana lokukhetha kwakhe. Kumele amyekele azidingele indawo zokuhlala engelaye.

'KoDuly's?' uCephas uyabuza, emangele. Umuntu uwuthola njani umsebenzi endaweni elebizo elinjengalelo. Akujwayelekanga.

'Yebo. KoDuly's. Osesitaladini uWilson.' Uziyekela awele esofeni. Esediniswe yinjabulo. Uyajabula. Ukhululekile. Indlela entsha isimvulekele, uzahlangana labanye abantu emsebenzini, akhe ubungane obutsha, abe lasebenza labo, afumane ukuthi yena uyisimakanjani. Ulamandla akho, ukuzimisela. Ingqondo kaCephas iyazulazula. EkaNonceba isuthisekile.

UNonceba umphosela iphephandaba eligoqiweyo, edlala. UNonceba uzaligcina iphephandaba elilesimemezero somsebenzi asigombolozelayo, njalo asasiphendulayo, umsebenzi asewenzile, umhloliso awupasileyo. Ukuba enelise kalula ukuphendula imibuzo mayelana lomsebenzi, ukwenelisa ukuphumelela; akulabantu abanengi abalezithupha ezinhle ezemfundo ephezulu lapha edolobheni. Ulethuba elihle. Imfundo yomuntu wonke ihlezi iphazanyiswa yimpi. Izikolo ziyavalwa. Ziqhubeka zilokhu zivaliwe. Ikakhulu izikolo zabanali ezisemaphandleni. UNonceba ulokwenelisa ukuthwala injabulo okumangalisayo, uCephas uyacabanga. Umncane, unciphile, uhambela phezulu. Ugqoka izigqoko ezijwayelekileyo nje, iziketi ezincane, amabhulawuzi amhlophe, imibala emhlotshana ethandela umzimba. KuCephas kasikuthi kakhangi, kwenye indoda mhlawumbe izigqoko zifihla kakhulu. Umuntu ozifihla ubunguye bakhe,

olezigqoko ezingamangalisiyo, ongazibonakalisiyo njengesimilo sakhe. Lapha uNonceba ehleka uCephas ukhumbula ukujula kobuhlungu obuloNonceba; ubuhlungu obukuye yena Cephas. Lapha uNonceba ethabe njengalokhu ayikho khona khathesi, uCephas ucabanga ukwesaba kukaNonceba, okuyibuhlungu bukaCephas. Ebusweni bukaNonceba kulensalela yamanxeba; ukwenelisa kukaCephas ukuthanda. Ukuhleka kukaNonceba kuzwakala kukuCephas.

UCephas laye uselala ewumana. Ebusuku, uyagalula egazini. Uyaginya, uyagalula. Uvuka ephakathi kwamagingo. Uvele useke wahamba waya emnyango kaNonceba njalo wathinta inyawo zikaNonceba, ukuze abone ukuthi uNonceba engabe ekhona yini, ukuze adinge ukuthi kambe uNonceba laye engabe ekhathazekile njengaye. Uyema anganyikinyeki, ethuswe yikwenza kwakhe, engaboni akwenzayo, ethuswe layisizungu sakhe. Uxexebula izandla zakhe ezisusa kuNonceba, ngonanzelelo. UCephas uhamba kancinyane ebuyela ekamelweni lakhe, ethule, esesaba ukuthi uvele usevuse uNonceba. Inhliziyo yakhe itshaya kakhulu. Kunga yikwesaba kambe? Kanengi wayengathanda ukuthi angene ekamelweni likaNonceba elemvumo kaNonceba, ngolwazi lwakhe, njalo alale phansi eceleni kombheda kaNonceba, ukuthi azigoqe khonapho, ukubakhona nje. UCephas angavikela uNonceba, uCephas avikeleke emaphutsheni kaNonceba. UCephas uzakuba eselahle awakhe amaphupho. Ubuyela embhedeni wakhe, aphenduke ngapha langapha, njalo atshone emnyameni ongapheliyo. Uyalwisa ukuphuma emnyameni lowo, usesehluleka ukuphefumula. Lapha evula amehlo akhe, akulamnyama, akulakukhanya. Ulele enganyikinyeki embhedeni wakhe. Ingalo phezu kwebunzi lakhe. Igazi.

Ukuhambahamba kukaNonceba lenkulumo zakhe kuveza ukungajahi. UNonceba ugcina inwele zakhe zelukwe kuhle ziyimizila eqondileyo, zinhle njalo zimi ngendlela. UCephas udonsekela kuye kakhulu okwedlula lokho kuhlazeka okukhulu, ukuhleleka kuhle, kubumbeke kuhle: ubuhle bobukhona bakhe. UNonceba usekhule kuye njengen-goma enhle, uyacabanga uCephas. UThenjiwe wamenza wafuna ukuh-

luthuna sonke isikhathi engalweni zakhe, njalo asenze esabo.

Izelamani ezingamantombazana, amacele amabili, kodwa engaphikisani kangako: axhumene. Ukuzalwa kwabo, njalo lempilo abayabelanayo; kubambene. Umzila welinye ilizwi ukwelinye, okwenziwa ngelinye, kukwelinye, injabulo elula, ukuma kwesipikili, okwethambo, ikakhulu ilizwi: ubunye. Baphila omunye ekomunye, njalo lapha okwacina khona enye impilo; kwabanjalo lakwenye. Uyakwazi ukuthi lokho akubona ngoNonceba yilokho kuphela okwakubuyiseleka; usemenze waphelela ekwenzela yena Cephas ngokwakhe. Kungaba kukhulu okwedlulisileyo ukumcela ukuthi aphelele. Kungeke kwenzeke. Kwanele ukuthi uNonceba enelise ukuhleka laye. UThenjiwe wenza ukuthi uCephas azilahlele kuye, njalo uCephas wayekwazi ukuthi kwakuyini ukubakhona uphelele phakathi kombuso womunye umuntu, ukuba seduze kwakhe kakhulu njengesikhumba sakhe: uNonceba umenza azinze. Kaphi lutho olumenza angahlaliseki, akulalutho olunjalo. Njalo umkhangela engelamizwa edlulisileyo, ekhatshana sibili, mhlawumbe engakholwa; ngempela kalasizatho sokupha okwedlula ukubakhona kwakhe, wenza uCephas ahlale exekelane laye, njengomnewabo, kodwa usebe yikho konke okuligugu kuCephas.

UThenjiwe wamupha konke: ngemini eyodwa, impilo yakhe yaguquka okupheleleyo engathi wayengakaze aphile ngaphambilini, engakaze abone ukutshona kwelanga kumbe ukusa kumbe izithunzi emini, inina laphenduka lamupha ibizo lalo njengokumngona. Walahla yonke into njalo wafuna kuphela ukukhanya okusemehlweni kaThenjiwe. Kwathi bekhangelwa ikusasa, kwakhanya okunengi kuvele sekumotshakele. Lokho yikho okwakuyikukhanga kwakhe - ukwenelisa ukuthatha inyathelo elingaba yingozi, ukuphatheka kwakhe okupheleleyo kumzuzwana owodwa engathi sonke isikhathi kwakuyikulahlisa, ukumthakazelela kwakhe okungasuthisekiyo ngitsho, lokwedlula lokho ayekuzwisile kumbe lokho ayengakuveza yena mayelana ngaye yena Cephas. Wamthandela amandla akhe, ukwenelisa kwakhe ukummangalisa. Uyamkhumbula uThenjiwe kanye lothando olu-

julileyo abasebelutholile. Uyamkhumbula. Kayisi komunye imizwa, impela; kukhona okutsha kumumo wakhe wakhathesi. Okutsha; okungaziwayo; okusanda kutholakala. Uleqiniso ngakho. Uyamangala ukuthi kambe kungabe kulemihlobo etshiyeneyo eyothando engabakhona phakathi kwendoda lowesifazana, njengoba nje kulempilo ezitshiyeneyo, eziphilwayo: imiculo etshiyeneyo kunjongo yinye eyothando.

UNonceba ulapha, ulaye; lokhu, sibili, yikuthemba. Uyamethemba. Angeke alinge ukubaqathanisa; ophilayo lofileyo. Angeke alinge ukukhetha. Kudingeka ukuthi angakhethi ngitsho lokucabanga ngomhlobo wothando awukhethayo, umfanekiso womunye ukhona uvikelekile komunye. Akumelanga alinge abuze ukuqhubeka kwakhe ngemizwa, ngothando - uhlobo lokuya emacansini lesihlobo, ukuthanda umuntu lodadewabo. Kulolu udaba yikuphikisana lokufa kuphela, mhlawumbe. Hatshi. Ngempela akusikuya emacansini lesihlobo. Kuqonde kakhulu ukukukhangela ngokuthi yikufisa izihlobo. Lapho kulapha okulokuya kwakhe emacansini lesihlobo, eku-fiseni inyamanye, izwi linye, ubunqunu bunye. Lokhu yiwo umhlobo wakhe wokuba lecala, umhlobo wesono sakhe. Uyemukela ukubakhona kokuphela kwemizwa yakhe, akuzwayo enhliziyweni; isifiso esisindayo, sinjalo, ngemva kokufa. Uyamangala ukuthi kambe angabe kalazwelo, uzinakekela yena ngokwakhe, ekwenzeni kwakhe, lapha kukhangelwa ukuma kwezinto. Uyamangala ukuthi kambe umuntu kungathiwa kalazwelo, kanaki, endabeni zothando, lapha umuntu ephatheke kukho kangaka. Yikubhuqa, ukuthi kawulazwelo yena umuntu elemizwa emikhulu kangaka. Ikakhulu kukhangelwa ukufa kukaThenjiwe. Kusemukelwa ukuthi uNonceba wakubona lokho kufa kusenzeke. Yena ngokwakhe walinyazwa kabi. Kuphinde kukhangelwe ukuthi yena Cephas wayethanda uThenjiwe ngeqiniso. Kukhangelwe lokhu. Uzivumele njani ukuthi kube lokutsha akuzwayo? Kambe lolu luthando oluzelwe yibuhlungu, yikulahlekelwa lithemba, emhlabeni wosizi lokungakholwa? Kungabe ngumhlobo wokuthoba, imizwa yokwelapha ukuba nguyeye kwakhe ok-

wabhidlikayo, njalo uma kunjalo, kwanele na, kungamqoqa njalo kumenze aqhubeke?

Uthando yimizwa umuntu angayilawula na, ayibandezele phansi kumbe yisenzo sokunanzelela esiphongufika khonokho nje, ekuqaleni umbono wakho kawulalutho, sekunjalo usuku lusuka lukhanye selulufitshane nje ngokuphangisa, isikhathi esehlukanisayo singasabekezeleleki, ubusuku sebubude kakhulu njalo bugcwele ngesizungu esingapheliyo engqondweni - ulindele. Uyamangala ngebanga asefike kulo elokona. Ulokhu engelacala, kufika ebangeni elithile; uyekele uNonceba wenza isinqumo ngempilo zabo bobabli. Umnyaka usuwedlule njalo bahlale ndawonye. Angamelela. Ikuseni yinye ngayinye uvuka ephakathi kobukhona bukaThenjiwe: lokungabikhona kwakhe okupheleleyo. Kambe kumele azizwe elacala, njengakuzwayo? Kambe kumele uthando lwakhe luzwakale njen- golwehlulekileyo, indlu edilikileyo? Ukweqa umthetho okolunye uhlobo. Uzwa ukuswela kokuthembeka okuthile, umhlobo wokuqina obangela amandla afana lokuzila, ukuzithiba okusenhliziyweni. Uyamangala ingabe useqe ngaphezulu kwenotho yakhe; indoda ezama ukuphila ngaphezu kwalokho elakho. Kunengi kakhulu akwenzayo. Uliqili elingelabuciko njalo eliyisiphofu elingadingi kuphela ukuca- banga ngesimo sezinto kodwa langenani lazo, ubukhatshana, lokuphapha kwazo zisuka ezandleni zakhe.

UNonceba usekhule kuye, yilokho nje, njengengoma enhle. Ufuna ukunceda, ukuthi kuqhubekele phambili, hatshi ukukungenisa phakathi kube ngokwakhe. Ufuna ukuthi uNonceba angathandabuzi inkululeko yakhe, ukuthi azi ukuthi yena uCephas ukhatshana kan- ganani ukusuka kuye. Uyabazi ubuthakathaka bukaNonceba. Uma uN- onceba engenza isinqumo sokusuka lapha efulathini, uzamncedisa ukuthola elinye. Uzamyekela futhi; lokhu, yisenzo sakhe sokucina sokuzifihla. Uzazimela laphaya abukele impilo yakhe iqhubeka en- gekho kuyo yena Cephas. UNonceba uvele usemncedile. Ukubukela injabulo yakhe ivuleka yikwazi ukuthi yena Cephas uvele usephathisile; bubili babo sebelwisane lokwedlulayo. Akusikuthi

kuphela ufuna ukuphathisa: kulosizi. UCephas uphakathi kosizi. UN-
onceba umenza ahlaliseke, umenza ezwe uxolo kulokho kufa
okungeke kwabuyiselwa emuva. Mhlawumbe ngabe yena Cephas
wayehlale eKezi. Kuyini okwakuzakwenzakala pho? Kambe ngabe
uThenjiwe wafa elaye loba kunjalo? Kakubanga lula ukumqonda
ngenxa yokuthi yena Cephas wayengekho, abesifazana ababili be-
bodwa endaweni ekhohlakeleyo njengeKezi phakathi kwempi enjen-
gale? Abesifazana ababili. Amasotsha ehlo mile, etshisa imizi,
esethusela umhlaba ngokuzwisa ubuhlungu, ukufa, njalo ngamandla
awo amakhulu? Amasotsha esemkhosini wawo.

Uthando lukadadewabo osewafayo, uthando lukadadewabo ophi-
layo. Uthando lwabo bobabli. UCephas uzizwa ebekwe phakathi
kwabo, elenga, engenelisi ukubiza uthando lomunye wabo, udade-
wabo ophilayo, lowo ongelapha amaphupho akhe; kudingeka ukuthi
angalahli ukukhanuka kwakhe uThenjiwe. Kujwayelekile kakhulu,
kuseduze kakhulu. Walondla kusukela ngalowana umnyaka ok-
wakungazakali kuhle khona oka-1979, lapho bubili babo babelindele
inkululeko ukuthi ibathole, sibili lapho ilizwe lonke lalilindele inkul-
uleko, njalo batholana bona endaweni yalokho. Sekunjalo uzibuse
wafika njalo weza lenkundla emangalisayo eyempi etshiyeneyo lapho
bonke ababa ngabalimeleyo khona. Njalo yena, uThenjiwe, waba
phakathi kwabokuqala ukubulawa. Njalo yena uNonceba, waba
ngophilayo. UCephas wayebukele idolobho liguquka ngalowo mnyaka
njalo wasuka waya efulathini esuka elokitshini leMpopoma, ekwen-
zela nje ukuthi atshengise ukuthi uzibuse wayesefikile sibili, ukuthi
aphatheke kuzithembiso zikazibuse ezinkulu, emhlabathini kazibuse
owokuma kwedolobho. Wayengeke acabanga uThenjiwe ehlala
phakathi kwedolobho laye, inziki yokuphila kukaThenjiwe, iseKezi.
Wayengakacabangi ngakho ngitsho kwaze kwathi ibizo likaThenjiwe
selithe bha emakhasini ephephandaba njalo ingalo zakhe zaqhuqha
ngosizi ayengeke alwehlisa. Ekuqaleni, wayengakhohlwanga ngitsho
lalinye lamazwi. Sekunjalo wakhala, esethemba izwi linye ngalinye.

Ulindele isibonakaliso esisuka kuNonceba. Hatshi ubuhle

bokuhamba kwengalo zakhe okuphatha ingqondo yakhe, ebukele izandla zakhe zicatsha ngaphansi kwekhushini lapha ephumula esofeni, indololwane zakhe zigobele kuye yena Cephas, edonsela phezulu uzwezwe lwesigqoko sakhe selanga ngaphezu kwamahlombe akhe, engananzelele ukuthi uCephas umdonsele amehlo; enganyikinyeki. Angathanda ukugcina umzuzu lo, awelule, abuyele futhi kuwo kokuphela, uNonceba engumoya obuthakathaka enzikini yephupho lakhe. Uyazisola ngokunanzelela uNonceba ngale indlela; ukudinga kwakhe ukuthi abe ngumnikazi wokunye lokunye ukuhamba kwengalo kaNonceba. Kodwa, kamfuqi. Ulindele ukuqiniseka kwamazwi kaNonceba. Ufuna ukuba leqiniso. Angenelisa kuphela ukumelela uNonceba ukuthi amnanzelele ngokupheleleyo njen-gokumcabanga kwakhe yena Cephas. Ukufisa akusavaleleki. Sekuphuphumela ngaphandle, kungavunyelwanga, kufuna ukukhulunywa. Lapha lulokhu luthandabuzwa, lusenqatshelwa, luvallelwa, yilapho lukhula luzothile, yilapho lufuqa ngamandla, sekunjalo lwehlula lapha oluqala khona. Kalungcolisi lutho. Umzuzu omsulwa yilapho isifiso singahlawulwanga; lapho siseyinto elindelweyo kuphela, ekholwayo, umuzwa othuleyo. Isifiso sinjengendlala. Sihlasela umzimba njalo siwenze ugobe, ngobuhlungu. EsikaCephas siqala ngobuhlungu obukhulu okokuthi kasanelisi ukukuphatha. Sekumele adinge isisusa sakho. Uxhumanisa ubuhlungu lokungabikhona kwesisusa sabo, kuThenjiwe, kodwa kubo, sekuphuze kwedlulisa.

Uzalinda uNonceba aze aphendukele kuye ngokumangala okulingana lokwakhe, lokufisa okulinganayo, laye, uNonceba, aze ezwe ukuthi uma engatshiya ikamelo, umhlaba wakhe uzancipha. Uma ebamba uNonceba, uThenjiwe laye uzakuba esengalweni zakhe. Angasinda kulokho na? Njalo kuye uNonceba, kambe ukubakhona kuka-Cephas sekunjalo kungaba njengokuvikeleka kumbe njengokwethusela?

UNonceba ukhupha amasandali akhe njalo aphumuze inyawo zakhe ezibeke phezulu kwesitulo esiseceleni kwetafula. Ngolunye nje usuku. Isivalo siyavuleka. NguCephas. Uphakamisa amehlo amkhangele.

Uyasukuma, amncedise ukubeka amaphakethe akhe phezu kwetafula, amafoluda, izingwalo. Ususa amangilazi akhe emehlweni akhe, uwabeka phezu kwetafula. Ingilazi elifileyo.

‘O...amangilazi akho...uwawisile na?’ Uyatsho, emangele.

‘Awile ngesikhathi ngisiza ngiqansa izitebhisi, khonapha nje phandle. Kade esesikhwameni seyembe yami.’

UNonceba uhambisa iminwe yakhe phezu kwalapho okucezuke khona. Kulokhu kusalingene. UCephas udobha amangilazi, uwafaka emehlweni. Ukukhanya kuyagoba, kuwele emdulini ongakwelinye icele. Usewakhupha futhi ewabeka phezu kwetafula. Unqotshiwe.

‘Ngizafakisa amatsha kusasa. Ngiyawaswela ukuze ngibale, kungenjalo ngizaphuza ekwenzeni ucwaningo lwami. Ngivele sengingemuva.’

UNonceba uyawahlolisisa amangilazi. Uwafaka esikhwameni sawo esimnyama. Insimbi zawo zihlangene. Ziqinile.

‘Ngisesengumntwana ngangisesaba ukudinga indawo enhle eyoku-catsha lapho engangingasoze ngibonwe khona. Ngangicabanga ngokuba ngedwa, ngingatholwanga, ngilahlekile. Angizange kengime ngicabange ukuthi engangikudinga kuphela yikusuka ngiphume lapha engangicatshe khona uma kwakungekho ongitholileyo.’

UNonceba uyathokoza. Ugolomba uCephas. Kungenzeka na ukuthi uNonceba uthi uCephas usethole uNonceba? Ukuthi angeke abe esaba yedwa ngemva kwalokhu? Kungabe uNonceba ukhuluma ngokukhula kukazibuse wakhe? Ngokwakuqala ukuthi akhulume ngokobuntwana bakhe.

‘Pho. Kuyini okufake emafayilini akho lamuhla?’ Uyatsho, ngemva kokuba uCephas esekhulule ibhatshi lakhe walibeka ekamelweni lakhe. Useseduze lokuhlala phansi eduze kwakhe, ukuthi ambuze ukuthi uwuzwa njani umsebenzi wakhe omutsha, uma ezaqhubeka ekhonale. UNonceba uhlala ethinta ngengcazelo kaCephas eyomnyaka odluleyo, eyokudinga ibizo lakhe lelikadadewabo uThenjiwe, ephephandabeni. UCephas kaphenduli. Angabuya lephepha ekhaya, kodwa lokho kungamdanisa uNonceba. Uyakwazi ukuthi yiyona ndlela

kaNonceba yokulwisana laleso sehlakalo, lokufa kukadadewabo, eyokuceza udaba, eyokungagxilisi amehlo kulokho okubi kakhulu okwaleso sehlakalo, kodwa engaxwayi udaba ngokupheleleyo. Le yiyona ndlela kaNonceba yokuba lesibindi, bubili babo bayakuzwisisa lokho. UNonceba kakhulumi ngoThenjiwe. Ngitsho loba kanye selokhu asuka eKezi. UCephas kaphenduli imibuzo kaNonceba mayelana lamafayili. Uyaphenduka kuphela njalo amhlekelele. Amandla kaNonceba izikhathi ezinengi ayammangalisa. Sebebe ngabangane.

Usebenza lapha okugcinwa khona imibhalo yesizwe eyeNational Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe. Wayengelani lokusika isaziso lesiyana ephephandabeni, kumbe ukusifaka emafayilini, njen-gokutsho kwakhe kuNonceba ngalesiya sikhathi. Bobabili bayakwazi lokhu. Kwakufanele ukuthi ngabe wamtshela nje kalula ukuthi wayekade ebal iphephandaba njengomuntu wonke. Kufanele ukuthi kwaba lokusolisayo ngaye, emnyakeni owedlulayo, ekuhlanganiseni lomsebenzi wakhe ukubathola kwakhe yena lodadewabo. Ukubathola kwakhe kwezwakala kungathi yinto esemthethweni. Wayezizwe ephathekile, ukuphonguthutsha nje engenela empilweni yakhe, esenza isicelo esezwakala siyikuhlanya ngitsho lakuye yena Cephas. Abantu ababili abangaziwayo abaphakathi kobunzima obukhulu okwamagama, besabelana ukulahlekelwa kunye. Wayengamazwi alungiselelweyo njalo wathwala kuphela amandla okufuqa kwenhliziyo yakhe. Ukukholwa kwakhe. Uthando olungajwayelekanga njalo olungapheliyo. Amazwi ayezabuya ngesikhathi sokuhlangana kwabo. Wayekade ethembe ukuthi uNonceba wayevele esesazi ngaye etshelwe ngudadewabo.

Ngokwazi uNonceba ngcono, khathesi usezwisisa uThenjiwe. Indlela enje ebhodayo eyokwazi ngaye, uyacabanga, ukumazi, ukuba ngabe wamwakekela ngcono, njengoba esefisa kakhulukazi khathesi, ukuthi ngabe wamvikela. Kwakungenzeka njani ukuthi angezwa ukuncenga okwakungemva kwezwi lakhe linye ngalinye, kusuka ekunyakazeni kunye ngakunye komzimba kaThenjiwe, lapha ayembambile, kusuka ethanjeni kusiya ethanjeni? Wayekhuthe njani

ukuguquka kombala wakhe eseduze njengalokho ayeyikho kuye, ephathekile, wakhutha inyembezi zakhe, lapha ayekhumbule khona phose konke mayelana laye, izwi linye ngalinye alikhulumayo, elinye lelinye lamazwi akhe, yena Cephas, ayewatsho kuye?

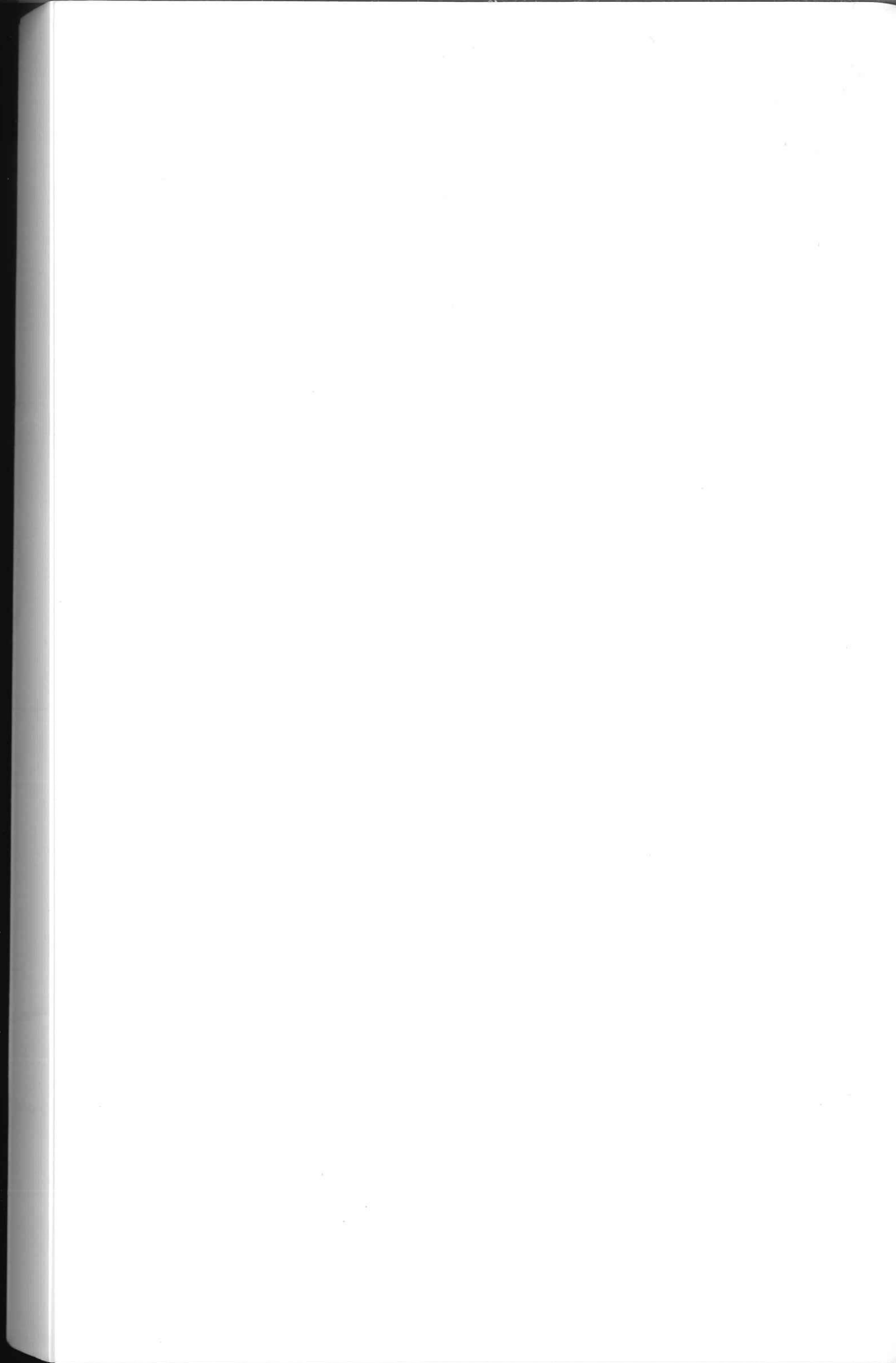
UThenjiwe wayefuna eminye imihlobo yeqiniso, engakemukeli iqiniso labo. Babengakazani ngitsho. UCephas wayekade engakawazi ukuphatha umhlobo lowo wemizwa ekhathazekileyo eyayikuye yena Cephas. UThenjiwe wayethikazile; uCephas wayethikazile; wamtshiya. Wayengamzwanga ngitsho. Mhlawumbe lokhu yikho okwakuyikufanana phakathi kwezintombi zombili ezelamanayo, ukumcela ukuthi amelele, uThenjiwe aze abize futhi ibizo lakhe. UCephas wayezayekela uNonceba enjalo. Amyekele njalo yena Cephas agqibele ukulangazelela kwakhe, kodwa kasoze amtshiye ahambe. Lapha ahlangana khona loNonceba, ngaleso sikhathi, wayedinga intethelelo, yokungabikhona, eyokukhohlwa, eyokuthi wamlahla: khathesi wayesesizwa ukuthi nguye owayesukile watshiya. UThenjiwe wayemcele ukuthi ahlale. Kudingeka ukuthi aqhubekele phambili lomumo womuntu ozisolayo: inhliziy o ezisolayo ingeke yaphinda kabili isiphosiso sayo sakuqala. Useqalisa ukubona angathi ubuthakathaka bakhe yisibindi.

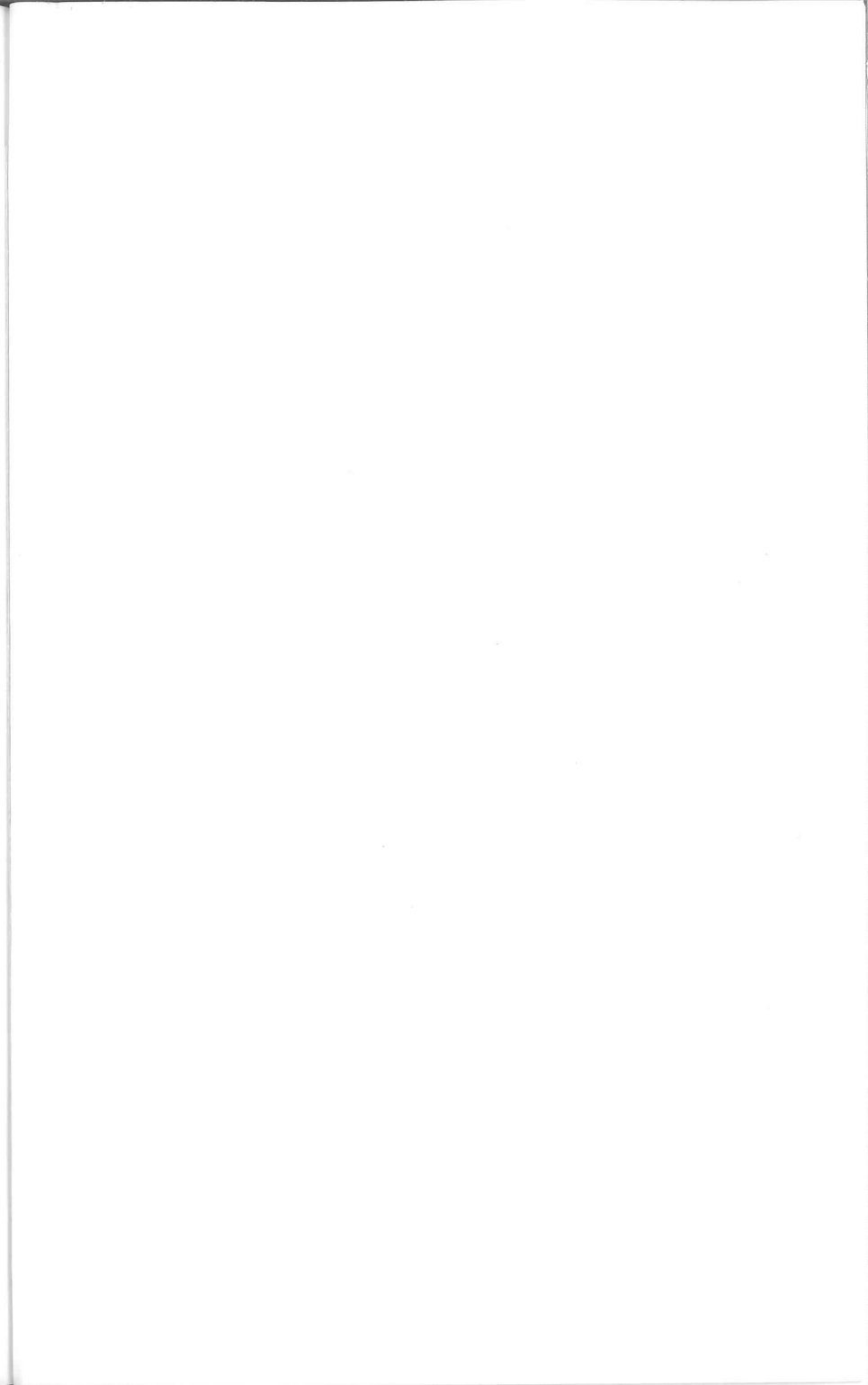
Udinga umhluzi ohlanzeke impela, ukuze ahlambe izilonda, amafutha, ukuze ahlambe izilonda zabo bobabili. Uyinhlanganisela, indoda, njalo umuntu ofela lokho akholwa kukho. Hatshi. Akusinto enkulu ukunikela uthando, kafanelwanga ligama lelo ngitsho. Kasimuntu ofele into akholelwa kuyo. Kalalutho angaludela. Kuyini alakho angakunikela? Uma ephenduka ukuthi akhangele, ngekabani impilo ayisindisayo? Uyakhumbula ethatha uNonceba esibhedlela ngemva kokukhutshwa kwakhe esibhedlela okokucina esuka ekuhlalini, ngemva kwalokho, ehlala phansi, etshombulula ibhanditshi ebusweni bukaNonceba, ilamafutha, ilomnuko olamandla owamafutha agcotshwe phezu kwayo. Ibhanditshi ilula, yonakele; iyaxexebuka njengelembu lokuvikela eliyisefa. Uvala amehlo akhe ukuze akhuphe ibhanditshi yangaphansi enamathele esikhumbeni. UNonceba

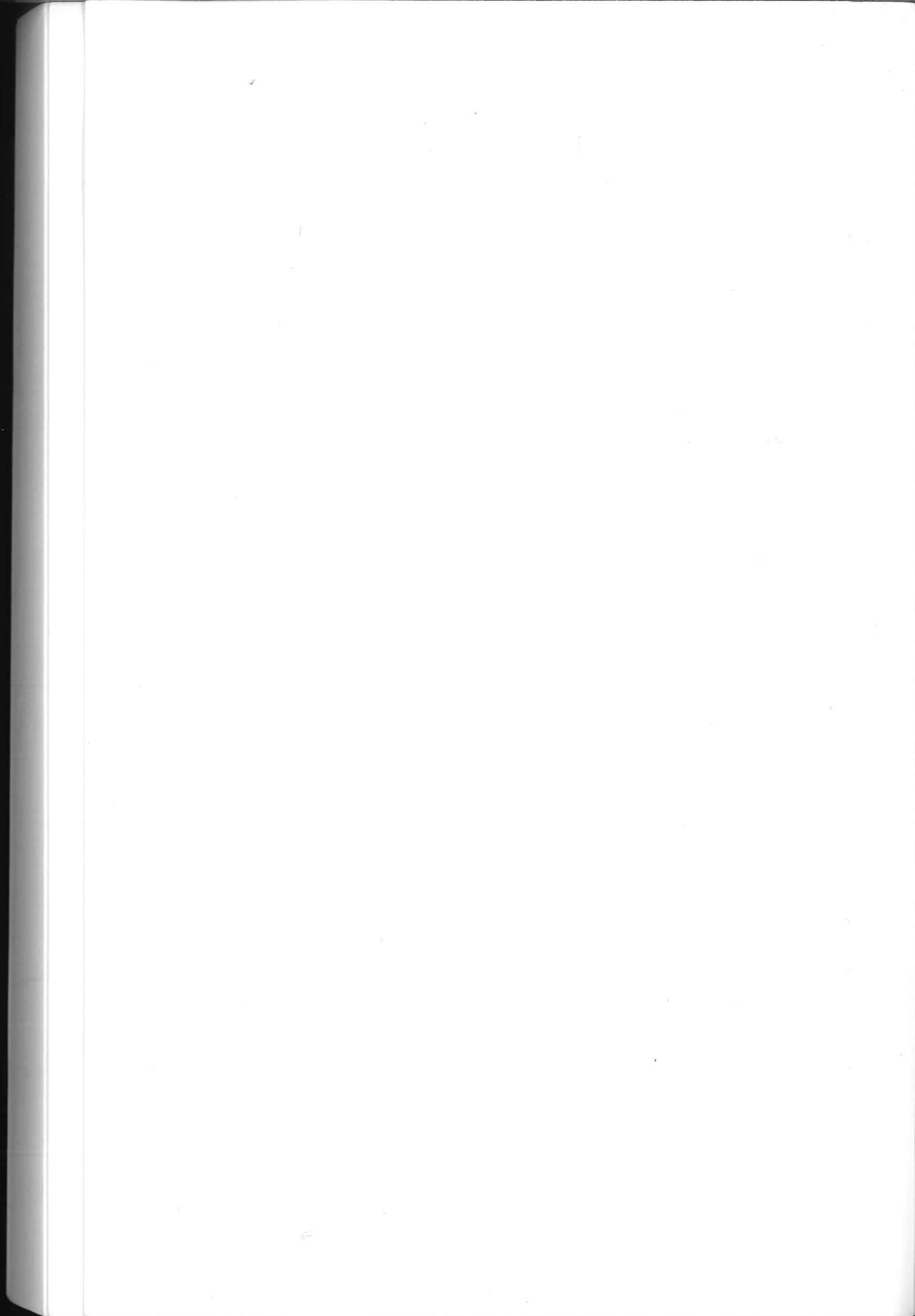
wabekezelela okubi kakhulu okudlulisileyo. UCephas ubuyisela ibhanditshi, elandela ngonanzelelo iziqondiso umongikazi amnika zona. Kakulalutho alutshoyo. Ukuhambahamba kwakhe kodwa kugcwala ikamelo, ingalo yakhe ibhoda lekhandla likaNonceba, izunguzeka kan-cane, emgoqela ekhwapheni lakhe, elandela ibhanditshi. Esondeza eduze, udingisisa entshiyeni zakhe, izihlathi zakhe, ukunganyikinyeki kwakhe. Uma kungaba lobuhlungu, khathesi, kumele kube nguye uCephas obuthwalayo.

UNonceba uthi nguye ozapheka. UCephas wala ehlezi njalo ulalela ukuhambahamba kukaNonceba ekamelweni eliseduze. UCephas udonsa ikhadi likaNonceba elesibhedlela elisefayilini elithanga. Kulemibiko ehamba itshiyana....watshaywa ngento ebukhali...kungaba yinto esikayo....lowo olinyaziweyo kazange ayi-bone into eyamlimazayo...umonakalo mkhulu...indebe zaqun-ywa....kufuneka ukuthi ahlinzwe ngokuphangisa...athungelwe isikhumba esithathwa kwenye indawo. Ubuyisela ikhadi efayilini yalo asukume aqonde ekhitshini. Uvele usecabangela ukuthi uNonceba ka-soze adle. Mhlawumbe uzaphongunatha nje okunye. Unanzelela ukuthi sekungamaviki amanengi elokhu engakathakazeleli ukudla.

Kumele ahlehlele emuva kuNonceba, mhlawumbe yena Cephas usephatheke kakhulu ekuphindeneni imbali. Kumele abambelele ekuvuseleleni imibuso yendulo, izakhiwo eziyizigombolozu, izindlu ezinjengobhalu lwenyosi, ingqamu zamatshe, imbiza ezafayo, imiduli efana lomhlane wenhlanzi, insika ezanyamalalayo emhlabeni omdala. Isizwe esitsha sidinga ukuvuselela okwadlulayo. Lapha agxilise khona amehlo akhe, kusendlini enjengobhalu lwenyosi, okumele yakhiwe emzini omdala kaLobengula koBulawayo ngomnyaka olandelayo. Umsebenzi wakhe yikufunda ukudala kutsha indlela ingatsha ezibuthakathaka ezigoba ngayo, zihlangane, njalo zome, ngendlela utshani obugobeka kuhle ngayo phezu kwesakhiwo njalo buseluka isidleke, ngendlela obuvikela ngayo ukuqanda mnandi kwendawo ezihlalekayo ngaphakathi; ukukhululwa.







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Izintombi Zamatshe Ezimbulwa yinovelu elezehlakalo ezenzakala zisuka emahlabathini eKezi omileyo, ziye ezintabeni ezilamatshe alenga phezu kwamanye alenifihlo aweGulati zisiya emigwaqweni yakoBulawayo enyakazelayo. Esebenzisa ulimi olubucayi njalo oluletha yonke imizwa, uYvonne Vera ugolomba amadlabuzane afikela abantu ngezwe labo lapha bezama ukuqathanisa umlando womuntu ngamunye lomlando wesizwe kanye lalapha okuba lengabano khona.

UThenjiwe loNonceba yizelamari, bakhulele eKezi baphila ngezikhathi ezinzima, izikhathi zempi yenkululeko okwathi ngomnyaka ka 1980 zaletha umoya omutsha owenkululeko lamadlabuzane. Umoya lo, njengakho konke, uyafika endaweni eyakhelweyo, eSitolo sakoThandabantu, lapha amanina aphethe inkululeko ngezandla zawo njalo aqinisa ikusa ngamabizo abantwabawo, njalo lapha abalweli benkululeko abesifazane, ababesandakuvela empini abatshengisa khona ukuzethemba kwabo okukhulu njalo benganake lutho.

Kodwa-ke le ngaphambili kwabo olunye uhlupho luyasungula phakathi kwabahlamuki abangathokoziswa ngumbuso omutsha lalabo abaphikisana labo. Ukubulala okuhlasimulisa umzimba kwasabalala kuzozonke izindawo zeKezi. Wonke umuntu usala elamameba, wonke umuntu uphila phakathi kokufa. Kwenzakalani kulabo abasala ngemva, labo abasala lemicabango yokubulawa, izithembiso zothando ezingagcwaliswanga, abalahliweyo, abahlanyukelweyo?

Izintombi Zamatshe Ezimbulwa yindaba engakhohlakaliyo, ehlukumezayo njalo ethinta kwamancane. Lapha uqhathshi lwamaganu asevuthwa kumbe ukukhazimula kwesifula kumbe ichambo elisagcokeni enqulwini yenina kuletha ukwesaba okunjengalokho kwesaba okwenziwa ngumliko, njengalokho okwenziwa yizibhamu, njengalokho okwenziwa luthando olujulileyo.

Kulolu gwalo olulenhlonipho kodwa olungelakwesaba, uYvonne Vera wenza ukuthi umfundi wakhe enlise ukumelana lobunzima bezimpi ezingakhulunywayo ngeqiniso elipheleleyo. Inovelu **Izintombi Zamatshe Ezimbulwa** yinovelu emangalisayo njalo enhle etshengisa ukuzithoba lesibindi komsebenzi kaVera.

Iihloko esathola umvunzo wakoMacmillan owaBalobi owe-Afrika, ngo2002.

Izintombi Zamatshe Ezimbulwa

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Inovelu liguqulelwe

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ISBN: 978 177922 142 1